WESTERN AUSTRALIAN READER

BOOK · V ·

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WESTERN AUSTRALIAN READER

BOOK V.

REVISED EDITION

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BOOK V.

BELL BIRDS.

Henry Kendall.

By channels of coolness the echoes are calling,
And down the dim gorges I hear the creek falling;
It lives in the mountain, where moss and the sedges
Touch with their beauty the banks and the ledges;
Through brakes of the cedar and sycamore bowers
Struggles the light that is love to the flowers.
And, softer than slumber, and sweeter than singing,
The notes of the bell-birds are running and ringing.

The silver-voiced bell-birds, the darlings of day-time,
They sing in September their songs of the May-time.
When shadows wax strong, and the thunder-bolts hurtle,
They hide with their fear in the leaves of the myrtle;
When rain and the sunbeams shine mingled together,
They start up like fairies that follow fair weather,

And straightway the hues of their feathers unfolden
Are the green and the purple, the blue and the golden.

October, the maiden of bright yellow tresses,
Loiters for love in these cool wildernesses;
Loiters knee-deep in the grasses to listen,
Where dripping rocks gleam and the leafy pools glisten.
Then is the time when the water-moons splendid
Break with their gold, and are scattered or blended
Over the creeks, till the woodlands have warning
Of songs of the bell-bird and wings of the morning.

Welcome as waters unkissed by the summers
Are the voices of bell-birds to thirsty far-comers,
When fiery December sets foot in the forest,
And the need of the wayfarer presses the sorest,
Pent in the ridges for ever and ever,
The bell-bird directs him to spring and to river,
With ring and with ripple, like runnels whose torrents
Are toned by the pebbles and leaves in the currents.

Often I sit, looking back to the childhood
Mixt with the sights and sounds of the wild wood,
Longing for power and the sweetness to fashion

Lyrics with beat like the heart-beats of passion—
Songs interwoven of lights and of laughters
Borrowed from bell-birds in far forest rafters;
So I might keep in the city and alleys
The beauty and strength of the deep mountain valleys,
Charming to slumber the pain of my losses
With glimpses of creeks and a vision of mosses.

STUDY NOTES.

1. The bell-bird is found in certain forest regions of New South Wales, Victoria and New Zealand. One of its notes is said to resemble the distant tolling of a bell, hence its name.

2. What line leads you to think that it has several different notes?

3. What lines describe the beauty of the bell-bird's home? In what kind of country would you seek this bird?

4. What words are used by the poet to describe the bell-bird's singing? During what months is the singing heard?

5. What line describes the bird's plumage?

6. In what month is the bushland seen in all it glories? To what is this month compared?

7. What is the tree that has bright yellow tresses in the spring-time?

8. What words are used to describe the beauty of the bush in the spring-time?

9. What sounds add to the beauty of the bush in the spring?

10. Where would you look for the bell-bird's nest? (See stanza 5 for answer.)

11. Quote the lines telling you that the poet loved nature.

12. The waters unkissed (not reached) by the summer sun would, of course, be the pools shaded by rocks and trees. What would guide the traveller to these waters?

Word-Study:

channels of coolness: gullies through which the streams flow.

cedar and syc'-a-more (sick'-a-more): forest-trees found in north-eastern part of New South Wales.

songs of the May-time: joyful songs sung in countries north of the equator when spring gladdens people's hearts. Our October is England's May.
shadows wax strong: the sky is covered with storm clouds.
water-moons: reflections of the moon in the pools.
lyrics (lir'-icks): sweet songs.
rafters: here the word refers to the limbs of forest trees—tree roofs.

COSETTE.

Victor Hugo—Les Miserables.

Part I.

It was getting late. Madame Thénardier, the innkeeper's wife, was in the kitchen cooking the supper. Around the table were seated several travellers, some of whom had just arrived. Cosette was sitting near the chimney in her usual place—that is to say, on the cross-bar underneath the table. She was dressed in rags, and her little bare feet were thrust into wooden shoes. She was knitting stockings by the light of the fire. But they were not for herself. Indeed, no! They were for Madame Thénardier's little girls, whose merry laughter could be heard in the next room.

Madame Thénardier was a great, ugly, giant of a woman, with a large face dotted with freckles, and a terrible tooth which projected from her mouth when she was quiet. She did all the work at the inn, and her only assistant was Cosette.

Now Cosette was very useful to the Thénardiers, for, though she was only eight years old,

she took the place of a servant. She washed, scrubbed, swept, ran about, panted for breath, moved heavy weights, and did all the hard work. For this she got no thanks from her cruel master and mistress, but was beaten, and went ragged and barefoot, even in winter.

One of Cosette's tasks was to fetch water when it was needed from the spring some distance away. As the poor child dreaded the idea of going to the spring at night, she was always careful to carry during the day all the water that was wanted.

Cosette was very unhappy, as she bent over her work in her dismal little corner. Her eyelid was quite black from a blow the woman had given her, and every now and then Madame would say, "How ugly she is with her black eye!" Cosette was also very much afraid she would be sent to the spring for more water. She had been obliged to fill the jugs in the bedrooms for the travellers who had just arrived. Now, there was no water left in the tank; and it was late, very late.

Cosette could feel her heart beating as she knitted. She counted the minutes as they passed, and wished it were morning. From time to time one of the travellers looked out into the street, and said, "It's black as pitch," or "Only a cat could find its way through the streets at this hour without a lantern." Cosette trembled with fear.

All at once one of the travellers came in, and exclaimed in a harsh voice—

"My horse has had no water!"

"Oh, yes, it has," said Madame Thénardier.

"But I tell you, mother, it has not," replied the man. Hearing this, Cosette crept out from under the table.

"Oh, indeed, sir, it has," she cried, "for I gave it a bucketful myself, and talked to it as it drank."

Cosette was not telling the truth; but she was afraid, for she knew there was no water left in the tank.

"I tell you it has not drunk," said the traveller, savagely. "I can tell by the way it is breathing. Come, give it water at once."

"Why, certainly," said Madame. "If the poor brute has not drunk, that is but fair." Then she shouted to Cosette, who had hidden under the table, to come out at once and give the horse water.

"But, Madame, there is no water," Cosette said faintly as she crept from her hiding place.

"Well, go and fetch some," said her mistress. "There's plenty at the spring."

Cosette hung her head, and fetched from the corner an empty bucket almost as big as herself. Madame Thénardier took some money from a drawer and gave it to Cosette.

"Here, take this, Miss Toad," she said, "and fetch back a loaf of bread from the baker's."

Cosette slipped the coin into the pocket of her apron, but still she hesitated before the open door.

"What are you waiting for?" shouted her mistress. "Off with you at once!"

Cosette went out and shut the door. She felt so sad and desolate as she went out that she couldn't help taking just one peep in the window of the toy shop nearby. It was very gay with tinsel and toys, for it was Christmas time. Right in front of the window the shopkeeper had placed an enormous doll, nearly two feet high. It was dressed in a pink gown, and had real hair and blue eyes.

The wonderful doll had been displayed in the window all day long, but no mother had been rich enough to buy it for her child. Madame's two little girls had spent hours admiring it, and even Cosette had managed to steal a glance at it. But, now that she saw it so close before her, she could only gaze in wonderment. The toy shop seemed just like a palace, and this doll was not a doll at all, but a lovely vision. "Only a queen or a princess could have a doll like that," she said to herself. She looked at the fine dress and the long fair hair, and she thought "How happy that doll must be!" She could not take her eyes off the wonderful sight. She forgot everything—even

the task on which she had been sent. Then suddenly she heard the harsh voice of her mistress—

"What, not gone yet, you little toad? Just wait till I catch you!"

Cosette picked up her bucket and ran off as hard as she could go.

Soon she had left the lights of the village behind her. She was very much afraid, and as she walked, she shook the handle of the bucket as hard as she could, for the noise comforted her a little. But the further she went, the darker it became. There was no one in the streets, except a woman who turned on seeing her pass, and muttered between her teeth, "Wherever can the child be going?"

There were still a few houses on either side of the road, and from time to time she saw a candle glimmering through the crack of a shutter. This gave her courage, for it meant there were people there; so she walked bravely on. But after she had passed the very last house, Cosette stopped, put down her bucket, and gazed about her in despair. Before her stretched a great, black, empty space, where wild beasts lurked. Poor Cosette! She dared not go a step further, and made up her mind to return.

"I'll tell her there was no water," she said; and taking up her bucket again, she hurried back towards the village.

She had not gone very far, however, when she stopped again at the thought of her mistress—her hideous, shrill voiced mistress, who would be sure to fly into a rage and beat her. After all, Cosette was more afraid of her mistress than of the darkness and all the wild beasts. So she turned back towards the dreaded wood, and did not stop running till she reached the spring.

Without taking time to breathe, Cosette plunged the bucket into the water. As she did so, the coin she carried in her apron pocket fell into the stream. But Cosette neither saw nor heard it fall. She drew up the bucket, and placed it on the grass beside her. Much as she wished to start off at once, she was so exhausted that she could not move a step.

At last she seized the bucket firmly in her two hands, and set off. But she had not gone more than a dozen yards, when she was obliged to set it down again. She breathed for a moment, then lifted the bucket once more, carrying it a little further this time. Her poor little hands were red and swollen; and each time she stopped, the cold water splashed her bare legs. She gave a little sob, but did not dare cry, for she was afraid of her mistress even at a distance. All at once she felt the bucket grow suddenly light. She raised her head, and saw before her the tall figure of a man. He had

come up quietly behind her, and without saying a word, had seized the handle of the bucket she was carrying.

"This is very heavy for you, my child," said the man.

"Yes, sir."

"Give it to me; I will carry it," he continued. Cosette let go the bucket, and the man walked on by her side.

"It is really very heavy," he muttered. "What is your age, little one?"

"Eight years, sir."

"And have you far to go with this?"

"About a quarter of an hour's walk."

"Have you no mother, my child?" he asked.

"I do not know," she replied. "I don't think so. Other girls have one, but I have not."

"Who sent you to fetch water from the wood at this hour?"

"Madame Thénardier. She is my mistress, and she keeps the inn."

"The inn?" remarked the man. "Well, I shall lodge there to-night. Show me the way."

Cosette no longer felt tired, and had no difficulty in keeping up with the stranger.

"Does Madame Thénardier keep no servant?" he asked after a few minutes.

"No, sir."

"Is there no one but you?"

"No one, sir, only Madame's two little girls."

"And what do they do?"

"Oh!" said the child, "they have handsome dolls, and they play about and amuse themselves all day."

"And what do you do?"

"Oh, I work."

"All day?"

"Yes, sir. Sometimes when I have finished my work they allow me to play."

"And what do you play with?"

"Oh, I have not many toys. I am not allowed to play with the young ladies' dolls. I have only a little leaden sword."

As they drew near the inn, Cosette touched his arm timidly.

"Will you let me carry my bucket now? Madame will be angry if she sees it has been carried for me."

STUDY NOTES.

PART I.

1. How old was Cosette? What did she say that makes you think she was an orphan?

2. Find passages showing that Madame Thénardier treated Cosette very cruelly. How did Madame treat her own children? How many children did she have? How did this woman and her husband earn their living?

3. Tell the story of Cosette's journey to the well.

4. Fill in the blanks in the following statement. Here is a list of words from which you are to choose the ones that will make the statement a true one:—delighted, cruel, dangerous, pleasant, surprised, lonely, pitch-black, moonlight.

The stranger must have been . . . . . to meet a little girl in such a . . . . . place. He must have said to himself: "Whoever could be so . . . . . as to send such a little girl on such a . . . . . errand?"

5. The stranger asked Cosette many questions. What did he find out about her from these questions?

6. If you find anything untrue in the following sentence correct it:—Madame Thénardier was a small woman with a very pretty face and a pleasant voice.

Word-Study:

des'-o-late: lonely; forsaken.

hid'-e-ous: horrid; dreadful; frightful.

ex-haust'-ed: wearied; tired out; fatigued.

Madame (Mad-ahm): Mrs. **Thé-nar-dier** (Tay-nar-d-yay): a French surname.

Part II.

The man gave her the bucket just as they reached the inn, and Cosette tapped at the door. It was opened by Madame Thénardier.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" she said. "And time enough too. You've been playing, I suppose."

"Madame," said Cosette, trembling, "this gentleman wants a room."

The landlady gave the stranger a quick glance. She decided that he must be poor because of his threadbare coat and battered hat.

As she did not want such persons lodging at her inn, she said, "I am sorry, my good man, but I have no spare room."

"Put me where you like," said the man: "in the loft or in the stable. I will pay for it as if it were a bedroom."

The innkeeper agreed to this, and the man placed his stick and bundle on a form, and sat down at one of the tables. Cosette returned to her place under the kitchen table, and began knitting again; for wet and cold though she was, she did not dare go to the fire. Suddenly her mistress cried—

"Where's that loaf of bread, girl?" Cosette scrambled out from under the table. She had completely forgotten the loaf, but did not dare to say so.

"Madame, the baker's was shut up," she said.

"Then why didn't you knock?"

"I did, but they would not open."

"If that is not true, look out for yourself," scolded her mistress. "And, meanwhile, give me back the money."

Cosette put her hand into the pocket of her apron. The coin was not there.

"Well," said her mistress, "did you not hear me? Have you lost it? or are you trying to rob me?"

Poor Cosette could not find a word to say. She saw Madame stretch out her hand for the cat-o-nine-tails; and knowing full well what this meant, she managed to cry:

"Mercy, Madame! I will never do it again."

The stranger, who had not taken his eyes off Cosette since they entered the inn, took a coin from his own pocket, and said:

"I beg your pardon, Madame, but just now I saw something fall out of the little girl's pocket and roll away. Perhaps this is it?"

Madame knew it was not the real coin, for it was a much larger sum of money. But she said: "Yes, that's it"; then she slipped it into her pocket and let the child off with a scolding.

Just then the door opened, and Madame's two little daughters entered. They were neat and plump and prettily dressed. Madame smoothed their hair fondly, and said: "How smart you are!" Then they sat down by the fire and began to play with their doll.

It was only a broken old doll, but it seemed very wonderful to Cosette, who had never in her life owned a real doll. She watched the two little girls with envy. Suddenly the landlady noticed that Cosette was idling and watching the children instead of working.

"So that's the way you work, is it?" she exclaimed.

"Oh, Madame," said the stranger, "let her play!" But the landlady only said sharply:

"I cannot keep her for nothing. She must work."

"What is she doing?" the stranger asked in a gentle voice.

"She is knitting stockings for my little girls, who have hardly any."

The man looked at Cosette's little bare feet that were all blue with the cold.

"When will she be finished?" he asked.

"Not for three or four days; perhaps longer, for she is a lazy young good-for-nothing."

"How much will they be worth when finished?"

"At least three francs," said the landlady.

"Will you take five francs for them now?"

The innkeeper thought this a right good bargain, so he said: "Why, yes, sir, if such be your fancy." The landlady, however, demanded to see the five francs first.

"You shall have the money at once," the man said, as he drew a five franc piece from his pocket and laid it on the table. Then he turned to Cosette, and said:

"Your labour is mine now, so play, my child."

"Is it true, Madame? May I play?" asked Cosette.

"Play," said her mistress in a terrible voice. Cosette put aside her work, but did not dare leave her place. She took her little leaden sword from a box behind her, and, wrapping it in a few old rags, just as if it had been a real doll, she laid it on her arm and sang softly to lull it to sleep.

All at once Cosette broke off her song; for there on the ground, quite close to the table, lay the children's doll. They had thrown it down, and were playing with the kitten which they had dressed up in some old clothes. Cosette glanced quickly around to make sure that no one was looking at her. Then she set aside her little sword, pounced on the doll, and in a moment was back again in her place, clasping the doll tightly in her arms.

This joy had lasted nearly a quarter of an hour, when, unfortunately, Cosette allowed one of the shiny pink legs to peep out from under the table. One of the little girls caught sight of it, and ran indignantly to tell Madame.

"Mother!" she cried, "just look!" Cosette, who had neither seen nor heard anything, continued to rock the doll gently to and fro.

"Cosette!" cried the landlady, her voice terrible with anger.

Gently and despairingly, Cosette laid the doll on the ground; then, clasping her little hands together, she burst into tears.

"Why, what is the matter?" asked the stranger.

"Don't you see?" screamed the woman. "That little wretch has dared to touch my children's doll!"

Cosette began to sob louder than ever. The man went straight to the street door, opened it, and walked out. The landlady had scarcely time to give Cosette a good sound blow before the man returned, carrying in his arms the wonderful doll from the toy shop near by.

"Here, this is for you," he said to Cosette. She looked at the doll in wonder, not daring to touch it. Then she crept silently back to her corner under the table.

"Well, Cosette," the landlady said in a voice she tried to make gentle, "Why don't you take your doll?"

Cosette could not have felt more bewildered if someone had said to her: "Little girl, you are Queen of France." Very slowly, she approached the doll, murmuring timidly: "May I, Madame?"

"Of course," said her mistress, "since the gentleman gives it to you."

"Is it true, sir? Is the doll really mine?"

The stranger nodded, and placed the doll's little hand in hers. Cosette at once seized the doll, and held it tightly in her arms.

"I shall call her Catherine," she said. It was a strange sight to see the doll's dainty muslins and ribbons pressed tightly against Cosette's rags.

"May I put her in a chair, Madame?" she asked.

"Yes, my child," answered the mistress.

The little girls watched enviously while Cosette placed Catherine in a chair, and then crouched down on the ground before her in silent wonder.

"Play, Cosette," said the stranger.

"Oh! I am playing," the child answered.

It was not till long after Cosette had been sent off to bed, that the stranger stirred from his easy chair, took up his stick and bundle, and went to the room which Madame, on second thoughts, had given him. There he removed his shoes, took a candlestick, and left the room as if in search of something. He went along the passage till he reached the staircase. Here he heard a very gentle sound, like the breathing of a child. Following this sound he came upon an old straw mattress, thrown on the floor of the tiny recess under the staircase.

Here, fully dressed, and with only a torn old blanket for warmth, lay Cosette, fast asleep.

She was holding her doll in her arms. As the stranger looked at her, she gave a little sigh, and pressed the doll more closely to her.

Through an open door close by, could be seen the two little white beds of the landlady's children. The stranger was about to return to his room, when he saw two pretty little shoes, one a little bigger than the other. In each shoe was a shining silver coin. The man remembered that it was Christmas. Then he caught sight of a third object. It was one of Cosette's poor, half-broken wooden shoes; and it was quite empty. The stranger's heart was touched with pity. He took from his pocket a shining golden coin, and laid it gently in the shoe. Then he crept noiselessly back to his room.

STUDY NOTES.

PART II.

1. Why did Madame Thénardier at first think that the stranger who accompanied Cosette was poor? Was she right or wrong? Give reasons for your answer.

2. Tell how the stranger saved Cosette from being beaten with the cat-o-nine-tails (a whip with nine thongs). What other acts of kindness did he show Cosette?

3. You know that Cosette felt very happy when she went to bed: what makes you think she must have been happier when she awoke the following morning (Christmas morning)?

Word-Study:

in-dig'-nant-ly: feeling angry at unjust treatment.

de-spair'-ing-ly: with a hopeless feeling.

be-wil'-der-ed (be-wil'-derd): greatly puzzled or perplexed.

en'-vi-ous-ly: with a spiteful or jealous feeling.

re-cess': an open space in the building.

THE WINDMILL.

Edward Verrall Lucas—Old Lamps for New.

If you should bid me make a choice
  'Twixt wind and water mill,
In spite of all the millpond's charms,
I'd take those gleaming sweeping arms
  High on a windy hill.

The miller stands before his door,
  And whistles for a breeze;
And, when it comes, his sails go round
With such a mighty rushing sound,
  You'd think of heavy seas.

And if the wind declines to blow,
  The miller takes a nap,
(Although he'd better spend an hour
In brushing at the dust and flour
  That line his coat and cap).

Now, if the water mill were his,
  Such rest he'd never know,
For round and round his crushing wheel,
His dashing, splashing, plashing wheel,
  Unceasingly would go.

The Windmill.

So, if you'd bid me make a choice
'Twixt wind and water mill,
In spite of all the millpond's charms,
I'd take those gleaming sweeping arms
High on the windy hill.

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STUDY NOTES.

The wind mill and the water mill were both used in olden days to grind wheat. What are the charms of the water mill? Find the lines that answer this question. Find the lines telling you that the windmill looks majestic (grand). Which of the two mills works the more constantly? Find the lines answering this question. Where is this windmill situated? Why? What words give you a fine picture of the water mill?

SIR BRUIN AND SIR REYNARD.

From the German.

Part I.

The next morning away went Sir Bruin, the bear, in quest of the fox; and, as he went along through a dark forest in which Reynard had a by-path which he used when he was out hunting or being hunted, he saw a high mountain over which he must pass to reach Malepardus. For though Reynard had many houses, Malepardus was his chief and most ancient castle, and there he resorted both for defence and pleasure.

When Sir Bruin at length came to the place, he found the gates shut; at which, after he had knocked, sitting upon his tail, he called aloud, "Sir Reynard, are you at home? I am Bruin, your kinsman, sent by the king to summon you to court, to answer the many grave complaints made against you. His Majesty has taken a vow to put you to death and to seize all your goods, should you fail to answer his summons. Therefore, fair kinsman, be advised by your friend, and come with me to court, in order to avoid the fate that will otherwise overtake you."

Reynard was basking in the sun, near the gate, as was his custom; and when he heard these words, he departed into one of his holes in order that he might decide how best to bring the bear into disgrace and add to his own credit, for he hated Sir Bruin. At last coming forth, he said, "Is it you, dear uncle Bruin? You are very welcome; and please excuse my delay in saying so; but the truth is that, when you began to speak, I was saying my vespers, and of course one must not neglect one's prayers on any account. As for the king, I think he has done you no good service in sending you a long weary journey; for it is certain that, had you not come, I should, of my own accord, have attended the court to-morrow. Alas! uncle, could his majesty find no meaner messenger than your noble self to employ in these paltry affairs? Truly it appears strange to me, especially since, next his

royal self, you are of greatest renown, both in point of blood and riches. For my part, I would that we were both at court, as I fear our journey will be exceedingly troublesome. To say the truth, since I have given over eating flesh, I have lived upon strange new meats, which have very much disagreed with me and swelled my body, as if it were about to burst."

"Alas! dear cousin," said the bear, "what kind of meat can it be that makes you so ill?"

"Uncle," replied the fox, "what good will it do you to know? The food was simple and mean, for we poor country folk cannot afford expensive dishes; yet, not to delay you, the food that I ate was honeycombs, large, full, and very pleasant. But I was so very hungry that I ate too much, and now I am ill."

"Ay!" quoth Bruin, "honeycombs did you say? Can it be that you hold honeycombs in such slight respect, nephew? Why, sir, it is food for the greatest emperors in the world. Help me, fair nephew, to some of these honeycombs, and I will be your servant as long as I live."

"You are jesting with me, surely, uncle," replied the fox.

"Jest with you?" cried Bruin. "Why, I am so serious that for one lick of honeycomb you may count me your friend for life."

"If that is so," answered the fox, "I will bring you where ten of you would not be able to eat the whole at a meal."

"Not ten of us," cried the bear, "not ten of us! it is impossible; for I could eat the whole of it myself."

"Then know, uncle, that near at hand dwells a farmer named Lanfert, who owns so much honey that you could not eat it all in seven years; and for your love and friendship's sake, I will put you in possession of it."

Bruin, now mad for the honey, swore that for one good meal he would stop the mouths of all Reynard's enemies; and Reynard assured him that, if he should wish for seven tons, he should have it. These words pleased the bear so much that he could hardly stand for laughing.

"Well," thought the fox, "this is good fortune; though I will certainly lead him where he shall not laugh so heartily." He then said, "Uncle, we must lose no time, and I will spare no pains to meet your wishes."

The bear gave him thanks, and away they went together. At length they came to Lanfert's house, the sight of which made Bruin dance for joy. This Lanfert was a brawny carpenter, who had brought into his yard a large oak, which he had begun to split, and had left in it two wedges, so that the cleft lay wide open. This was just what the fox wished. Then, with a smiling countenance, he turned to the bear and said, "Behold now, dear uncle, and do be careful; for within this tree is an enormous quantity of honey. The combs are sweet and good, but to eat too much is always dangerous,

and may prove troublesome on your journey, which I would not have happen to you for the world, because of my friendship for you."

"Concern not yourself for me, nephew Reynard," said the bear; "I am not such a fool as to eat too much, if I can only get at the honey."

"Well, then, put your head in the trunk of the oak, and you shall find what you want," replied the nephew.

With all haste the bear thrust his head well into the hole. When the fox saw this, he instantly ran and pulled the wedges out of the tree, so that the bear remained locked fast. Flattery or anger was now useless, for his nephew had got him in so secure a prison that he could not escape. All that he could do was to howl and bray, to scratch and tumble, and make such a noise that Lanfert came running out of the house to see what was the matter. He held a sharp hook in his hand, and while the bear lay tearing at the tree and roaring, the fox cried out in scorn, "He is coming, uncle! I fear you will not like the honey. Is it good? Do not eat too much, or you will delay your journey back to court. If your stomach is too full, Lanfert will give you drink to digest it." Having said which, he set off again towards his castle.

STUDY NOTES.

PART I.

1. Who sent Sir Bruin to Malepardus? What duty did he have to perform there?

2. Find a sentence showing that Sir Bruin was a most important person at the King's Court.

3. If you think the following sentence is untrue, correct it so that it will be true: Reynard loved his uncle, Sir Bruin, very dearly, and was therefore very pleased to see him.

4. Find a sentence showing that Bruin was very fond of honey. What sentence shows that he was very greedy?

5. Which two of the following words best describe the fox:—brave, deceitful, honest, cunning, stupid?

6. Tell how Reynard trapped Bruin.

Word-Study:

quest: search.
by-path: side-track.
ves'-pers: the evening song or service in church.
pal'-try (**pal** rhymes with **call**): mean; trifling.
brawn'-y: having strong muscles.

Part II.

Lanfert, finding that the bear was held fast, ran to his neighbours and desired them to come. The tidings ran quickly through the town, so that there was neither man, woman, nor child but ran to see; some with one weapon and some with another: goads, rakes, broomsticks, whatever they could lay hands on.

Hearing the approach of this army, Bruin fell into great fear; and, as they came thundering down upon him, he struggled so fiercely that he contrived to get his head out of danger by leaving behind the best part of his skin, along with his ears. Never was there a more hideous-looking creature; for his face was covered with blood so that he could hardly see,

and the claws of his fore feet had been torn off so that he could hardly move. To add to his miseries, Lanfert and his crew then set upon him, and so belaboured the poor beast that he was in danger of his life. He sat and sighed sadly during the massacre, but Lanfert's brother rained such cruel blows on his pate that he could stand it no longer; he made a desperate plunge into the river near by, through a cluster of old wives, many of whom he threw into the water which was broad and deep. The men who were pursuing the bear now gave all their attention to the rescue of their women folk, whereupon Bruin cut the stream with renewed strength and swam away. He bitterly cursed the honey tree, and more bitterly the fox, who had not only betrayed him, but had also made him lose his hood from his face and his leather gloves from his fingers. In this condition he swam about three miles down the stream, when he grew so very weary that he was obliged to seek a landing. The blood trickled down his face, and his breath was so short that it seemed as if his last hour was come.

Meanwhile the fox, on his way home, had stolen a fat pullet, and running through a by-path to escape pursuit, he now came towards the river, feeling very joyful. "My fortune is made," said he to himself, "for my greatest enemy at the court is dead, and no one can suspect me." But, as he spoke, looking towards

the river, he espied the bear lying down to ease his grievous wounds. At this sight Reynard's heart misgave him, and he railed bitterly against Lanfert the carpenter, cursing him for a silly fool, that did not know how to kill a bear in a trap. "What madman," cried he, "would have lost such good venison? So fat and wholesome!" Thus fretting and chiding, he came to the river, where he found the bear covered with wounds.

"God preserve you, sir!" exclaimed the fox by way of greeting.

"O, thou foul red villain!" said the bear to himself. "What impudence can equal thine?"

"Have you paid for the honeycombs you stole?" continued the fox. "If the honey was good, you may have plenty more at the same price. Good uncle, tell me before I go, into what order of the Church you mean to enter, that you wear this new-fashioned hood? Will you be a monk, an abbot, or a friar? He that shaved your crown seems also to have cropped your ears; your forelock is lost, and your leather gloves are gone. Fie, sloven, go not bare-headed!"

These taunts made Bruin mad with rage; but because he could not take revenge, he was obliged to let Reynard talk on. At last, to avoid him, he again plunged into the river, and landed on the other side, where he began to consider how best he might reach the court; for

he had lost both his ears and his claws, and could scarcely walk. Yet he must move forward, which he could do only by sitting upon the ground and tumbling his body over and over. In this manner he first rolled about half a mile, then rested, and rolled another half mile, and so on until he at last tumbled his way to court. Noticing this strange method of approach, a number of courtiers gazed upon him in wonder, little dreaming that it was the famous Sir Bruin.

The king was the first to recognize him and he said, "It is Sir Bruin! What villains have wounded him thus? Where can he have been, that he could contrive to bring his death back with him? Let us hear what tidings he has got!"

"O, my dread sovereign lord and king!" cried out the bear, "I have to make a most grievous complaint. Behold how I am massacred; a massacre I humbly beseech you to revenge on that false and wicked Reynard, who hath wrought me this foul disgrace and slaughter, merely because I have done your royal pleasure in conveying him a summons to court!"

"How durst he do this thing?" said his majesty. "Now, by my crown I swear, I will take such revenge as shall make the traitor tremble and remember the foul deed!"

The whole council was therefore summoned and consulted how best to proceed against the

cunning fox. At length, after much discussion, all agreed that he should be again summoned to appear at court and answer his wicked deeds.

STUDY NOTES.

PART II.

1. Imagine yourself Sir Bruin: tell the King exactly what happened after you put your head into the opening of the log to get the honey. Tell also how you escaped.

2. Why was Reynard angry when he found that Bruin had escaped? Was it because he feared that Bruin would kill him, or because he knew that the King would hear of the cruel trick he had played on Bruin?

3. You will remember that Bruin's scalp had been torn off in his struggles to get his head out of the log. The skin had also been torn off from his forepaws. He now seemed to be wearing a new hood and new gloves. What colour were the hood and gloves? Monks sometimes wear hoods; that is why Reynard asked Bruin if he were going to become a monk. Tell what Bruin looked like when Reynard first saw him after his escape. The King thought Bruin looked dreadful. What did the King say that showed he was very angry with Reynard?

Word-Study:

tid'-ings (Sound **tid** as **tide**): news.

con-trived': managed.

be-la'-boured (be-la'-berd): beat soundly.

mas'-sa-cre (mas'-sa-ker): butchery; killing very cruelly.

pate: head.

griev'-ous (griev'-us; **griev** rhymes with **leave**): painful.

ven'-i-son: the flesh of beasts of the chase (beasts that are hunted).

chid'-ing (rhymes with **riding**): blaming; finding fault with.

THE SONG OF THE SEA WIND.

Austin Dobson.

How it sings, sings, sings,
  Blowing sharply from the sea-line,
With an edge of salt that stings;
  How it laughs aloud, and passes,
  As it cuts the close cliff-grasses;
    How it sings again and whistles
    As it shakes the stout sea-thistles—
      How it sings!

How it shrieks, shrieks, shrieks
  In the crannies of the headland,
In the gashes of the creeks;
  How it shrieks once more, and catches
  Up the yellow foam in patches;
    How it whirls it out and over
    To the cornfield and the clover—
      How it shrieks!

How it roars, roars, roars
  In the iron under-caverns,
In the hollows of the shores;
  How it roars anew, and thunders,
  As a strong hull splits and sunders,
    And the spent ship, tempest driven,
    On the reef lies rent and riven—
      How it roars!

How it wails, wails, wails
  In the tangle of the wreckage,
In the flapping of the sails,
  How it sobs away subsiding,
  Like a tired child after chiding;
    And across the ground-swell rolling
    You can hear the bell-buoy tolling—
      How it wails!

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STUDY NOTES.

1. Here you have a description of a wind-storm. What lines make you think that the wind is blowing from the sea to the shore? The storm increases in fury: what verse pictures the increasing fury? In what verse is the full fury of the storm pictured? What verse gives you a picture of the storm as it subsides (calms)?

2. What words tell of the beginning of the storm? of the increasing fury? of the full fury? of the calming down (subsiding)?

3. What do the mouths of the creeks look like? The iron under-caverns would be the caves under the iron-stone rock.

4. What is it that makes the wind seem to cry aloud (wail)? The answer is given you in the last verse. The wailing now dies down to laughing? crying? sobbing? Which is the correct answer?

The angry wind is compared to a.....child who is..... after being..... Fill in these blanks from the following words: praised, scolded, naughty, tired, sleepy.

Word-Study:

cran'-nies: narrow openings; crevices.

sun'-ders: breaks into parts; divides; separates.

riv'-en: torn.

sub-sid'-ing: settling down; becoming calm again.

ground'-swell: the heaving or swell of the sea after a heavy storm.

bell'-buoy: a buoy with a bell fastened to it which is rung by the waves.

THE PIGEONS OF VENICE.

From "Educating by Story-Telling," by K. Cather.

In one of the upland valleys of Italy, shut away from the rest of the world by the high, white peaks men call the Dolomites, there lived, about five hundred years ago, a little boy named Leonardo. He dwelt in a tiny hut with his black-eyed peasant mother, fed the pigeons and milked the goats each day, and in the evening—the pleasant summer evening that spread rainbow-coloured draperies over the Dolomite peaks—he lay in the shadows under the plum-tree, thinking about his brother Vittorio, who was a soldier down in the great city of Venice.

"I wish brother would come home," he said to his mother one morning, as they ate their breakfast of macaroni and mountain bread, "because he always tells such wonderful things about the city. Some day I mean to go there and be a soldier too."

His dark eyes gleamed as he spoke, and he sat very straight in his heavy oaken chair, as of course a soldier ought to do.

Everybody knows that wishes do not always come true, but sometimes they do, and when that happens, the whole world seems brighter and lovelier than it seemed before. The next afternoon, as Leonardo was turning the goats into their enclosure, he gave a shout so joyous

The pigeons of Venice in front of St. Mark's Square.

that even Armada the weaver, in his shop at the other end of the village, heard and ran to see what it meant. He soon found out, for he saw Leonardo hurrying toward a man who was moving along the highway. Vittorio, the soldier brother, was coming home, coming back to the mountain village with many a tale of the splendid city beside the Adriatic, and perhaps with a goody that would taste very sweet after the coarse food of weeks and months.

Far into the night the brothers sat and talked together; talked of palaces and gliding gondolas, of great lords and ladies, of soldiers moving in splendid uniforms about the Piazza of St. Mark. They talked of Carnival time too, of the merry pranks the people played on each other, of the procession on the water and the presents given to the Doge.

"And sometimes," Vittorio exclaimed proudly, "they are very splendid. Sometimes they are of gold and silver, and of silk stuffs brought from the Indies."

Leonardo sat silent for a minute. He knew little of present-giving, for in the mountains where he lived, there was no money to spend on such things. But always, when he made his mother a garland of flowers on her birthday, she seemed so happy about it that he thought it must be very lovely to bestow gifts. So he said softly: "I should like to send a present to the Doge. It would seem like doing something for Venice. But I have nothing to give."

"Wait until you are a man and can be a soldier," the big brother answered. "Then you will be doing much."

The next morning he was up at daybreak. Vittorio had only two days' leave, which meant that he must start back at noon, and his mother had promised that Leonardo might go with him to the edge of the village, if he finished his tasks in time. So he milked the goats before there was a bit of stirring about the hut, and led the geese from their pen to crop the green grass on the hillside. Then he cut some grass, and threw it to the old horse that was their most prized possession; and, by the time his brother came from the hut, he called to him: "I have only to feed the pigeons yet."

Vittorio smiled and stood watching as the boy whistled the birds.

The gentle creatures flew up at Leonardo's call, and, as he scattered crumbs to them, he thought again of the great Carnival at Venice and the gifts that would be made to the Doge. He wished that he too might join that throng of givers, but he possessed nothing except his pigeons, and a bird would seem a very poor present to offer a ruler. But he happened to think that the schoolmaster had once told him it is not the cost or the beauty of an offering that makes it precious, but the goodwill of the giver, and that a beggar's gift may be a lovelier present than that of a prince. The schoolmaster was very wise. He could both read and

write, which only a few could do in that day, so anything that he said must be true; and the memory of the words brought an idea to Leonardo that made the boy's eyes dance.

"Vittorio," he exclaimed suddenly, "I have thought of something."

Vittorio wondered what excited his brother so.

"Well?" he asked as he walked near.

"Will you take a pair of pigeons back to the city with you?"

"A pair of pigeons," the soldier repeated. "Why?"

"I want to send a present to the Doge, and I have nothing else," he answered. "But the birds are so gentle that I am sure he will like them. They are fine carriers, too."

Vittorio smiled. As he was a soldier in the army of the Doge, he was pleased that his brother showed such loyalty to the master he served. It meant that he would probably grow up to be a good soldier, and in those days nothing was considered finer than that. So he answered pleasantly: "Of course I will, Leonardo, if you are sure you can give up your pets I will ask my captain, who knows the Doge well, to take them to him and say that they are the gift of a mountain boy."

Leonardo's eyes sparkled with delight. It seemed a glorious thing that he too might make

a present as well as the rich and the great; so he selected the handsomest pair in the covey; birds of a soft grey, with shadings of blue and purple along their delicate wings, and he and Vittorio made a rude cage in which to carry them to the city.

Then they walked together to the edge of the village, and Leonardo watched his brother go along the road that wound down to the low country. He waved good-bye until Vittorio passed from sight, then went back to the hut, happy in the thought that he was doing something for Venice.

Many months passed. It was September when Vittorio went away, and now the blossom time had come, and hills were bright with touches of summer. All through that long period Leonardo wondered much about the pigeons, but no word came from his brother; for letters went only by courier in those days, and poor folk could not pay for the carrying. But he was sure the birds had reached the Doge, for Vittorio had promised, and a soldier never broke his word.

Then one day in the autumn, when the brightness on the mountains had faded to bronze and grey, and squirrels were stocking their houses with the nuts that were dropping in the woods, Vittorio came back. He looked older and graver than the year before, and he seemed to be worrying about something.

"It is just to say good-bye," he said, as the grey-haired mother stroked his hands, and Leonardo looked at him with loving eyes. "The war has begun, and we soldiers of Venice must sail away to Candia for the fighting."

Leonardo's eyes grew wide, and tears came into them as he exclaimed: "If only I were old enough to go with you and help serve our glorious city of St. Mark!"

The big man laid his hand lovingly on the dark head.

"Never mind, brother," he said. "You have already done much. I gave your birds to my captain, who took them to the Doge; and the Doge is proud of them, because they are splendid carriers. So Dandolo, our general, will take them along with the army to bring back news of the war. And now good-bye. When the fighting is over, I will come again."

He mounted his horse and rode away, and two pairs of dewy eyes looked after him as he went.

The days that followed seemed very long to the two who waited in the highlands. They knew that the army had gone, and that, away on the eastern island, the fighting had perhaps begun. But what of the fate of the Venetian hosts, and what of the son and brother who had sailed under the standard of the Lion? They could only hope and wonder.

Slowly, slowly dragged the days, but no word came back.

One morning, while Leonardo and his mother prayed and waited in the mountain cabin, down in Venice in the splendid Palace of the Doges the Council of Ten sat and pondered. They talked much about the absent army, wondering if victory or defeat had been its share, and while they wondered there came a fluttering of soft grey wings.

"Pigeons!" some one called. "See, they are carriers!"

The dignified assemblage broke up in excitement, for they knew the tiny birds were messengers, and the men hurried to read the messages fastened to their crimson feet.

"They come from Dandolo," said one of the nobles, "bringing news of the war."

"From Candia!" another exclaimed. "It cannot be that they have flown so far!"

But it was true, for, upon reading the message, the nobles learned that the Venetian army had been victorious and the soldiers would soon sail home in triumph. The tiny birds had flown all the long leagues across the sea to carry the glad news to the waiting people.

Up in the hut in the Italian highlands Leonardo and his mother still watched and wondered; when one evening a few days later Armando, the village weaver, came by on his way home from the city. He was greatly excited, and called to them as he stopped at the door.

"Rejoice," he said, "for the war is over!"

"How do you know?" the mother asked. "Are the soldiers back?"

"No. But the pigeons have brought the word, and every one is glad."

"Pigeons!" exclaimed Leonardo. "My pigeons! Then after all I did something for Venice."

And he spoke the truth. So much did the message mean to the anxious people that the law-makers said they would always keep the birds and their young and their children's young. And, although hundreds of years have passed since then, still the grey-winged creatures fly about St. Mark's Square, and the people love to feed them. For they know they are descended from the pair sent to the Doge by a mountain boy, Leonardo's pigeons, that long ago flew across the wide seas, bringing word of the victory of the Venetian hosts.

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STUDY NOTES.

1. On what map would you look to find Venice? What sea is it on? How long ago is it since this story happened? What makes you think that Venice was a wealthy and gay city? What name was given to the ruler of that city?

2. The Dol-o-mites are a branch of the Alps. How do you know that the valley in which Leonardo and his mother lived was a very deep one? What word tells you that they had a little farm? What animals were kept on their farm?

3. What present did Leonardo send to the Doge?

4. What reason had Leonardo to feel proud of his present?

Word-Study:

gon'-do-la: a long, narrow boat with a high prow and stern, used on the canals of Venice.
Pi-az'-za: market place; square (open space in Italian towns).
car'-ni-val: merrymaking; festival.
cov'-ey (kuv'-y): a brood or hatch of birds.
cou'-ri-er (koo'-ri-er): a messenger sent with haste to carry letters.
Can'-di-a: an island in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea, now called Crete.
Ve-ne'-tian (Ve-ne'-shan): of Venice.
Doge (Doje): the chief ruler in Venice long ago.

THE BALLAD OF THE DROVER.

Henry Lawson.

Across the stony ridges,
  Across the rolling plain,
Young Harry Dale, the drover,
  Comes riding home again.
And well his stock-horse bears him,
  And light of heart is he,
And stoutly his old pack-horse
  Is trotting by his knee.

Up Queensland way with cattle
  He travelled regions vast;
And many months have vanished
  Since home-folk saw him last.
He hums a song of someone
  He hopes to marry soon;
And hobble-chains and camp-ware
  Keep jingling to the tune.

Beyond the hazy dado
  Against the lower skies,
And yon blue line of ranges,
  The homestead station lies.
And thitherward the drover
  Jogs through the lazy noon,
While hobble-chain and camp-ware
  Are jingling to a tune.

An hour has filled the heavens
  With storm-clouds inky black;
At times the lightning trickles
  Around the drover's track;
But Harry pushes onward,
  His horses' strength he tries,
In hope to reach the river
  Before the flood shall rise.

The thunder from above him
  Goes rolling o'er the plain;
And down on thirsty pastures
  In torrents falls the rain.
And every creek and gully
  Sends forth its little flood,
Till the river runs a banker,
  All stained with yellow mud.

Now Harry speaks to Rover,
  The best dog on the plains,
And to his hardy horses,
  And strokes their shaggy manes:
"We've breasted bigger rivers
  When floods were at their height;
Nor shall this gutter stop us
  From getting home to-night!"

The thunder growls a warning,
  The ghastly lightnings gleam,
As the drover turns his horses
  To swim the fatal stream.
But, oh! the flood runs stronger
  Than e'er it ran before;
The saddle-horse is failing,
  And only half-way o'er!

When flashes next the lightning,
  The flood's grey breast is blank,
And a cattle-dog and pack-horse
  Are struggling up the bank.
But in the lonely homestead,
  The girl will wait in vain—
He'll never pass the stations
  In charge of stock again.

The faithful dog a moment
  Sits panting on the bank,
And then swims through the current
  To where his master sank.
And round and round in circles
  He fights with failing strength,
Till borne down by the waters,
  The old dog sinks at length.

Across the flooded lowlands
  And slopes of sodden loam
The pack-horse struggles onward,
  To take dumb tidings home.
And mud-stained, wet and weary,
  Through ranges dark goes he;
While hobble-chains and tinware
  Are sounding eerily.

. . . . . .

The floods are in the ocean,
  The stream is clear again,
And now a verdant carpet
  Is stretched across the plain.
But someone's eyes are saddened,
  And someone's heart still bleeds
In sorrow for the drover
  Who sleeps among the reeds.

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STUDY NOTES.

1. A drover is one who drives sheep or cattle to market. What lines tell you that some of the cattle stations of Queensland are very far from the market towns? What lines tell you that the drover is returning home? What name is given to the horse that carries the camp-ware and hobble chains? When, do you think, are the hobble chains used? What would the camp-ware consist of?

2. There are now signs of an approaching thunder storm: what are the signs? What makes you think that the storm must have been very heavy—a deluge? Such storms are not uncommon in parts of Queensland: what lines lead you to think that this statement is true? What does Harry Dale hear that tells him to beware of danger?

3. Tell how the dog tried to save his master. Which of the horses escaped drowning? The drover's people (his mother, father or other relatives) knew what had happened to him: what told them of his fate?

4. Read the last four lines: who is the someone? Find two lines that answer this question.

Word-Study:

da'-do (day'-do: **do** rhymes with **go**): the lower part of the walls of a room that are specially decorated. The dark band of clouds just above the horizon is here called a dado.

pas'-tures: grass lands.

ee'-ri-ly (**ee** rhymes with **me**; sound **ri** as in **rim**): in a strange, unearthly way.

ver'-dant: fresh and green.

MOSES AT THE FAIR.

[This passage is from "The Vicar of Wakefield," written by Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774). In this tale the Vicar is supposed to be relating the history of the family. His wife, who was fond of show, persuaded him that it would be proper to sell their old colt at a neighbouring fair, and buy a horse that would carry single or double, and make a pretty appearance at church or upon a visit.]

As the fair happened on the following day, I had intentions of going myself; but my wife persuaded me that I had a cold, and nothing could prevail upon her to permit me from home. "No, my dear," said she, "our son Moses is a discreet boy, and can buy and sell to very good advantage; you know all our great bargains are of his purchasing. He always stands out and higgles, and actually tires them till he gets a bargain."

As I had some opinion of my son's prudence, I was willing enough to entrust him with this commission; and the next morning I perceived his sisters mighty busy in fitting out Moses for the Fair; trimming his hair, brushing his buckles, and cocking his hat with pins. The business of the toilet being over, we had at last the satisfaction of seeing him mounted upon the colt, with a deal box before him to bring home groceries in. He had on a coat made of that cloth they call thunder and lightning, which, though grown too short, was much too good to be thrown away. His waistcoat was of gosling green, and his sisters had tied his hair with a broad black riband. We all followed

him several paces from the door, bawling after him, "Good luck, good luck!" till we could see him no longer.

* * * * * * *

When it was now almost nightfall, I expressed my wonder what could keep our son so long at the fair. "Never mind our son," cried my wife, "depend upon it he knows what he is about. I'll warrant we'll never see him sell his hen on a rainy day. I have seen him buy such bargains as would amaze one.—But as I live, yonder comes Moses, without a horse, and the box at his back!"

As she spoke, Moses came slowly on foot, and sweating under the deal box, which he had strapped round his shoulders like a pedlar.

"Welcome, welcome, Moses; well, my boy, what have you brought us from the fair?"

"I have brought you myself," cried Moses, with a sly look, and resting the box on the dresser.

"Aye, Moses," cried my wife, "that we know, but where is the horse?"

"I have sold him," cried Moses, "for three pounds five shillings and two pence."

"Well done, my good boy," returned she, "I knew you would touch them off. Between ourselves, three pounds five shillings and two pence is no bad day's work. Come, let us have it then."

We all followed . . . bawling after him "Good luck, good luck!"

"I have brought back no money," cried Moses again. "I have laid it all out in a bargain, and here it is," pulling out a bundle from his breast; "here they are; a gross of green spectacles, with silver rims and shagreen cases."

"A gross of green spectacles!" replied my wife in a faint voice. "And you have parted with the colt, and brought us back nothing but a gross of green paltry spectacles?"

"Dear mother," cried the boy, "why won't you listen to reason? I had them a dead bargain, or I should not have bought them. The silver rims alone will sell for double the money."

"A fig for the silver rims!" cried my wife in a passion; "I dare swear they won't sell for above half the money at the rate of broken silver, five shillings an ounce."

"You need be under no uneasiness," cried I, "about selling the rims, for they are not worth sixpence; for I perceive they are only copper varnished over!"

"What," cried my wife, "not silver? The rims not silver?"

"No," cried I, "no more silver than your saucepan!"

"And so," returned she, "we have parted with the colt, and have only got a gross of green spectacles with copper rims and shagreen

cases! A murrain take such trumpery! The blockhead has been imposed upon, and should have known his company better."

"There you are wrong, my dear," cried I, "he should not have known them at all."

"Marry, hang the idiot," returned she, "to bring me such stuff; if I had them, I would throw them in the fire!"

"There again you are wrong, my dear," cried I; "for though they be copper, we will keep them by us; as copper spectacles, you know, are better than nothing."

By this time, the unfortunate Moses was undeceived. He now saw that he had indeed been imposed upon by a prowling sharper, who, observing his figure, had marked him for an easy prey. I therefore asked him the circumstances of his deception. He sold the horse, it seems, and walked the fair in search of another. A reverend looking man brought him to a tent, under pretence of having one to sell. "Here," continued Moses, "we met another man very well dressed, who desired to borrow twenty pounds upon these, saying that he wanted money, and would dispose of them for a third of their value. The first gentleman, who pretended to be my friend, whispered me to buy them, and cautioned me not to let so good an offer pass. I sent for Mr. Flamborough, and they talked him up as finely as they did me, and so at last we were persuaded to buy the two gross between us."

STUDY NOTES.

1. Why do you think Moses' mother was so anxious that *he* should go to the fair?

2. Was it a good thing or a bad thing that Moses' sisters were so particular about his dress? Give your reasons.

3. What makes you think that Moses was very proud of his bargain when he met his mother?

4. What shows that the vicar was more patient than his wife? What other differences were there in their characters?

Word-Study:

fair: a gathering for the sale of goods.
discreet: sensible.
higgles: cuts down the price.
prudence: sense.
commission: business.
toilet: dressing.
sell his hen on a rainy day: do business foolishly.
shagreen: untanned leather, generally dyed green.
dead bargain: cheap purchase.
murrain: plague.
trumpery: worthless finery.
sharper: rogue.
figure: appearance.

THE CUTLER'S APPRENTICE.

William Howitt.

Many years ago, there lived in Sheffield a cutler whose one great wish was to grow wealthy very quickly. He, therefore, took a great number of apprentices from the parish poor-house. Those in charge of this poor-house were so anxious to get rid of their charges that they willingly paid the cutler five pounds for each boy he took. Once off the parish's hands, no inquiries would afterwards be made concerning them, for they were orphans. The cutler could, therefore, work them as hard as he pleased; they were, in fact, his slaves. He had them up by four or five o'clock on a winter's morning, and kept them slaving till bed time. Summer and winter it was nothing but work, work, work.

Time, instead of bringing any relief, only made the old cutler more griping, selfish, and cruel. But now there came amongst the apprentices a very shrewd young lad who promised to mend matters for his fellow slaves, if they would help him. He had observed that their master, like many other miserly fellows, was as superstitious as he was greedy; and he, therefore, determined to play a trick on him.

The young apprentice had a friend in town who was a tanner, and who readily agreed to

help him in obtaining better treatment for the cutler's boys. From him he procured the loan of a huge black ox's hide with a long tail and a tremendous pair of horns. This he carried secretly to his bedroom; and, as the master always went to bed at the same time as his apprentices, that he might call them up early in the morning, the young fellow, instead of going to bed, put on the ox's hide and waited at his master's door, till he saw through the keyhole that the old man was just getting into bed. At that moment he opened the door and stalked slowly into the room. No sooner did the cutler perceive this hideous monster than crying, "Lord have mercy upon me! Lord save me!" he popped under the bed clothes and held them down upon him in an agony of terror.

Seeing the success of his scheme, the apprentice rushed fiercely to the old man's bed, and tossing and goring furiously with his horns, and clattering on the floor with his feet, he called out in a gruff voice:

> 'Old man! old man! for thy cruelty,
> Body and soul art thou given to me!
> Let me hear but once more the apprentices' cries,
> And I'll push thee, and crush thee, and bore out thine eyes!'

With that he gave the trembling old man two or three good pokes with his horns, laid on him heartily with a strong staff that he had in his hands, knocked down the candle, and disappeared. The rest of the apprentices, who had stood barefoot at the door to enjoy the

joke, were obliged to run and thrust their heads into their beds to prevent their laughter from being heard; but the old man was as silent as a stone.

At their usual hour, long before daylight, the boys jumped out of bed and began to dress themselves with sufficient bustle to attract their master's attention; but, as soon as he heard them, he called out to know what they were doing. When they answered that they were getting ready for work, "Oh!" said he, "never mind, my lads; go back to bed, there's plenty of time." The lads, of course, popped into bed again with right good will, highly pleased with the success of their experiment. They lay in bed till they heard the old man getting up, and then they arose and quickly set to work.

At breakfast and dinner the boys were agreeably surprised at the improvement in the supply and quality of their food, and at the coaxing tone in which their master spoke to them. "Help yourselves, lads, help yourselves; those that work hard should live well."

Other improvements soon followed. It was not long before the old man sent for a tailor, and had all the boys put into good handsome suits of clothes, that they might make a good appearance at church, a place that they had never before heard him mention, but whither he now regularly went with his apprentices walking in good order after him. Again, whenever a holiday came, instead of making his boys

spend it working in the factory, he would advise them to go out into the fields and have a mouthful of fresh air, saying very feelingly—"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." In short, the old man was completely cured of his cruelty—fear had done that which conscience could not do, and henceforth he continued to treat his apprentices with the greatest kindness. And it is believed that he did this the more willingly because he found to his surprise that, though his boys worked fewer hours, they actually did more work, and did it better; which is likely, for, when they were well fed, well clothed, and well used, they worked with a hearty goodwill.

It is said that, before the old man died, the clever apprentice, who had become a partner in the factory, told him of the trick that had been played on him; and that, though he was at first somewhat angry, he afterwards thoroughly enjoyed telling the story to his intimate friends. He could hardly ever be brought to believe that he did not see the fiend whisk out the candle with his tail, and vanish in a flash of fire.

Adapted.

STUDY NOTES.

1. Turn to "Oliver Twist" and find out how boys were treated in some of the parish poor-houses. Why did the cutler obtain most of his apprentices from the parish poor-house? How did he treat them? What three words best describe the cutler's character? What word tells you that he believed in ghosts?

2. What plan did the new apprentice form for obtaining better treatment from the old cutler? Tell the story as the young apprentice might have told it when he again met the tanner.

3. You will observe that apprentices, in those days, lived with their master who taught them their trade. Find the part of the story telling you that master and apprentices lived together.

4. Tell what improvements followed from the new apprentice's experiment.

5. Why was it that boys who worked fewer hours did more and better work?

Word-Study:

cut'-ler: one who makes knives or other cutting instruments.
parish: see notes on Oliver Twist.
ap-pren'-tice (ap-pren'-tiss): one who is bound by signed agreement to serve a master for a certain time to learn a trade.
grip'-ing (gripe'-ing): grasping.
shrewd: artful; cunning; knowing.
sup'-er-sti'-tious (sup'-er-stish'-us): believing in ghosts or magic.
gor'-ing (gore'-ing): piercing, as with a horn.
bus'-tle (bus'-s'l): great stir; quick movements.
con'-science (kon'-shens): inward feeling telling what is right or wrong conduct.
in'-tim-ate: close in friendship; familiar.

LULLABY.

J. G. Holland.

Rockaby, lullaby, bees in the clover!
Crooning so drowsily, crying so low;
Rockaby, lullaby, dear little rover!
Down into wonderland
Down to the under-land
Go, now go!
Down into wonderland go.

Rockaby, lullaby, rain on the clover,
(Tears on the eyelids that waver and weep!)
Rockaby, lullaby—bending it over!
Down on the mother-world,
Down on the other world,
Sleep, oh sleep!

Rockaby, lullaby, dew on the clover.
Dew on the eyes that will sparkle at dawn!
Rockaby, lullaby, dear little rover!
Into the stilly world,
Into the lily world
Gone! now gone!
Into the lily world gone.

STUDY NOTES.

1. What line makes you think that the baby can toddle about? How do you know that baby is very tired? What line means dream-land?

2. What are the tears on the eyelids compared to? Why has the baby been crying—is it because he is sick or because he is tired out with playing (roving)? What is the other world to which mother wants him to go?

3. What names are given to dream-world in the last verse? What lines tell you that baby has at last gone to sleep? What other lullaby songs do you know?

KIDNAPPED.

R. M. Ballantyne—Coral Island.

Part I.

One day we were all enjoying ourselves in the Water Garden, before going on a fishing excursion; for Peterkin had kept us in such constant supply of hogs that we had become quite tired of pork, and desired a change. Peterkin was sunning himself on the ledge of rock, while we were creeping among the rocks below. Happening to look up, I observed Peterkin cutting the most extraordinary capers and making violent signs for us to come up; so I gave Jack a push, and rose immediately.

"A sail! a sail! Ralph; look! Jack, away on the horizon there, just over the entrance to the lagoon!" cried Peterkin, as we scrambled up the rocks.

"So it is, and a schooner, too!" said Jack, as he proceeded hastily to dress.

Our hearts were thrown into a terrible flutter by this discovery, for if it should touch at our island, we had no doubt the captain would be happy to give us a passage to some of the civilized islands, where we could find a ship sailing for England or some other part of Europe. Home, with all its happy memories, rushed in upon my heart like a flood; and, much

though I loved the Coral Island and the bower which had now been our home so long, I felt that I could have quitted all at that moment without a sigh. With joyful thoughts we hastened to the highest point of rock near our dwelling, and awaited the arrival of the vessel; for we now perceived that she was making straight for the island, under a steady breeze.

In less than an hour she was close to the reef, where she rounded to, and backed her topsails in order to survey the coast. Seeing this, and fearing that the crew might not perceive us, we all three waved pieces of cocoanut cloth in the air, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing them beginning to lower a boat and bustle about the decks as if they meant to land. Suddenly a flag was run up to the peak, a little cloud of white smoke rose from the schooner's side, and, before we could guess their intentions, a cannon-shot came crashing through the bushes, carried away several cocoanut trees in its passage, and burst against the cliff a few yards below the spot on which we stood.

With feelings of terror we now observed that the flag at the schooner's peak was black, with a Death's head and cross bones upon it. As we gazed at each other in blank amazement, the same word escaped from all our lips: "Pirates!"

"What is to be done?" cried Peterkin, as we observed a boat shoot from the vessel's side, and make for the entrance of the reef. "If

they take us off the island, they will either throw us overboard for sport, or make pirates of us."

I did not reply, but looked hopefully at Jack. He stood with folded arms, his eyes fixed with a grave, anxious expression on the ground. "There is but one hope," said he, turning sadly to Peterkin; "perhaps, after all, we may not have to resort to it. If these villains are anxious to take us, they will soon overrun the whole island. But come, follow me!"

With these words, Jack bounded into the woods, and led us by a winding path to Spouting Cliff. Here he halted, and, advancing cautiously to the rocks, glanced over their edge. We were soon by his side, and saw the boat, which was crowded with armed men, just touching the shore. In an instant the crew landed, formed line, and rushed up to our bower.

In a few seconds we saw them hurrying back to the boat, one of them swinging the poor cat round his head by the tail. On reaching the water's edge, he tossed it far into the sea, and joined his companions who appeared to be holding a hasty council.

"You see what we may expect," said Jack bitterly. "The man who will wantonly kill a poor brute for sport will think little of murdering a fellow-creature. Now, boys, we have but one chance left—the Diamond Cave."

"The Diamond Cave!" cried Peterkin; "then my chance is a poor one, for I could not dive

into it if all the pirates on the Pacific were at my heels."

"Nay, but we will take you down, Peterkin," said I, "if you will only trust us."

As I spoke, we observed the pirates scatter over the beach, and make for the woods, and along shore.

"Now, Peterkin," said Jack, in a solemn tone, "you must make up your mind to do it, or we must make up our minds to die in your company."

"Oh, Jack, my dear friend," cried Peterkin, turning pale, "leave me; I don't believe they'll think it worth while to kill me. Go, you and Ralph, and dive into the cave."

"That I will not do," answered Jack quietly, while he picked up a stout cudgel from the ground. "So now, Ralph, we must prepare to meet these fellows. Their motto is, 'No quarter.' If we can manage to floor those coming in this direction, we may escape into the woods for a while."

"There are five of them," said I; "we have no chance."

"Come then," cried Peterkin, starting up, and grasping Jack tightly by the arm, "let us dive; I will go."

The pirates had already caught sight of us, and were now within a short distance of the rocks. Jack and I seized Peterkin by the arms.

"Now, keep quite still, no struggling," said Jack, "or we are lost."

Peterkin made no reply, but I saw by his face that he had fully made up his mind to go through with it. Just as the pirates gained the foot of the rocks which hid us for a moment from their view, we bent over the sea, and plunged down together head foremost. Peterkin behaved like a hero. He floated quietly between us like a log of wood, and we passed the tunnel and rose into the cave in a shorter space of time than I had ever done it before.

Peterkin drew a long, deep breath on reaching the surface; and in a few seconds we were all standing on the ledge of rock in safety. Jack now searched for the tinder and torch, which always lay in the cave. He soon found them, and, lighting the torch, revealed to Peterkin's wondering gaze the marvels of the place. But we were too wet to waste much time in looking about us. Our first care was to take off our clothes and wring them as dry as we could. This done, we proceeded to examine into the state of our larder, for, as Jack truly remarked, there was no knowing how long the pirates might remain on the island.

"Perhaps," said Peterkin, "they may take it into their heads to stop here altogether, and so we shall be buried alive in this place."

"Don't you think, Peterkin, that it's the nearest thing to being drowned alive that you

ever felt?" said Jack with a smile. "But I've no fear of that. These villains never stay long on shore. The sea is their home, so you may depend upon it that they won't stay more than a day or two at the furthest"

We now began to make arrangements for spending the night in the cavern. At various periods Jack and I had conveyed cocoanuts and other fruits, besides rolls of cocoanut cloth, to this submarine cave, partly for amusement, and partly from a feeling that we might possibly be driven one day to take shelter here from the savages. Little did we imagine that the first savages who would drive us into it would be white savages, perhaps our own countrymen. We found the cocoanuts and the cooked yams in good condition, but the bread-fruits were spoiled. We also found the cloth where we had left it; and, on opening it out, there proved to be sufficient to make a bed; which was important, as the rock was damp. Having collected it all together, we spread out our bed, placed our torch in the midst of us and ate our supper.

We sat long over our meal, talking together in quiet tones, for we did not like the dismal echoes that rang through the vault above, when we happened to raise our voices. At last the faint light that came through the opening died away, warning us that it was night and time for rest. We therefore put out our torch and lay down to sleep.

On awakening, it was some time ere we could remember where we were, and we were uncertain whether it was early or late. We saw by the faint light that it was day, but could not guess at the hour; so Jack proposed that he should dive and find out what was happening.

"No, Jack," said I, "you rest here. You've had enough to do during the last few days. Rest yourself now, and take care of Peterkin, while I go out to see what the pirates are about. I'll be very careful not to expose myself, and I'll bring you word again in a short time."

"Very well, Ralph," answered Jack, "please yourself, but don't be long; and if you'll take my advice, you'll go in your clothes, for I would like to have some fresh cocoanuts, and climbing trees without clothes is uncomfortable, to say the least of it."

"The pirates will be sure to keep a sharp lookout," said Peterkin, "so pray be careful."

"No fear," said I; "good-bye."

"Good-bye," answered my comrades.

And while the words were yet sounding in my ears, I plunged into the water, and in a few seconds found myself in the open air. On rising, I was careful to come up gently and to breathe softly, while I kept close in beside the rocks; but, as I observed no one near me, I crept slowly out, and ascended the cliff a step at a time, till I obtained a full view of the shore. No pirates

were to be seen,—even their boat was gone; but as it was possible they might have hidden themselves, I did not venture too boldly forward. Then it occurred to me to look out to sea, when, to my surprise, I saw the pirate schooner sailing away almost hull-down on the horizon. On seeing this I uttered a shout of joy. I wanted to dive back to tell my companions the good news; but I checked myself, and ran to the top of the cliff, in order to make sure that the vessel I saw was indeed the pirate schooner. I looked long and anxiously at her, and giving vent to a deep sigh of relief, said aloud, "Yes, there she goes; the villains have been baulked of their prey this time at least."

"Not so sure of that!" said a deep voice at my side; while, at the same moment, a heavy hand grasped my shoulder, and held it as if in a vice.

STUDY NOTES.

PART I.

1. Jack, Ralph, and Peterkin were three young sailors who were shipwrecked on Coral Island in the Pacific Ocean, where they were forced to remain for some considerable time. Find the sentence telling you they were very excited at seeing the schooner. What did they do to attract the schooner's attention? What told them they had been seen?

2. The joy of the three friends was suddenly turned to—anger? alarm? excitement? Which is the correct answer?

3. There was now but one thought in the minds of the three friends: what was it?

4. Tell the story of the escape from the pirates as Jack might have told it in his diary.

5. What makes you think that Peterkin had never before visited Diamond Cave? What made Diamond Cave such a safe refuge against the pirates?

6. Who tells the story? Is it Ralph, or Peterkin, or Jack?

Word-Study:

ca'-pers: pranks.

schoon'-er (skoon'-er): a small, sharp-built vessel with two masts.

sur-vey': to examine.

coun'-cil (coun'-sil; **coun** rhymes with **town**): meeting

wan'-ton-ly: recklessly.

sub'-ma-rine (**rine** rhymes with **seen**): under water in the sea.

vault: a cell or underground apartment (room).

baulk'-ed: baffled; hindered.

Part II.

My heart seemed to leap into my throat at the words; and, turning round, I beheld a very big and fierce-looking man grinning at me.

"So, youngster," he said, with a wicked smile, while I felt his grasp tighten on my shoulder, "the villains have been baulked of their prey, have they? We shall see, we shall see. Now, you whelp, look yonder." As he spoke, the pirate uttered a shrill whistle. In a second or two it was answered, and the pirate-boat rowed round the point at the Water Garden, and came rapidly towards us. "Now, go, make a fire on that point; and hark'ee, youngster, if you try to run away, I'll send a quick and sure messenger after you," and he pointed warningly at his pistols.

I obeyed in silence, and as I happened to have the burning-glass in my pocket, a fire was speedily kindled, and a thick smoke ascended into the air. It had scarcely appeared for two minutes, when the boom of a gun rolled over the sea, and, looking up, I saw that the schooner was making for the island again. It now flashed across me that this was a ruse on the part of the pirates, and that they had sent their vessel away, knowing that it would lead us to suppose that they had left altogether. But there was no use of regret now. I was completely in their power, so I stood helplessly beside the pirate, watching the crew of the boat as they landed on the beach. For an instant I thought of rushing over the cliff into the sea, but this I saw I could not now accomplish, as some of the men were already between me and the water.

There was a good deal of jesting at the success of their scheme, as the crew ascended the rocks and addressed the man who had captured me, by the title of captain. They were a ferocious set of men, with shaggy beards and scowling brows. All of them were armed with cutlasses and pistols, and their costumes differed very little from that of the captain. As I looked from one to the other, and observed the low, scowling brows that never unbent, even when the men laughed, and the mean, rascally expression that sat on each face, I felt that my life hung by a hair.

"But where are the other cubs?" cried one of the men, with an oath that made me shudder. "I'll swear to it there were three, at least, if not more."

"You hear what he says, whelp; where are the other dogs?" said the captain.

"If you mean my companions," said I, in a low voice, "I won't tell you."

A loud laugh burst from the crew at this answer.

The pirate captain looked at me in surprise. Then, drawing a pistol from his belt, he cocked it and said, "Now, youngster, listen to me. I've no time to waste here. If you don't tell me all you know, I'll blow your brains out! Where are your comrades?"

"You may shoot me or throw me into the sea," I replied; "I'll not tell you."

The pirate captain grew white with rage as I spoke. "Say you so?" cried he, uttering a fierce oath. "Here, lads, take him by the legs and heave him in,—quick!"

The men, who were utterly silenced with surprise at my boldness, advanced and seized me, and, as they carried me towards the cliff, I felt not a little pleased at the success of my scheme; for I knew that once in the water I should be safe, and could rejoin Jack and Peterkin in the cave. But my hopes were suddenly blasted, for the captain cried out, "Hold on, lads, hold on! We'll give him a taste of the

thumb-screws before throwing him to the sharks. Away with him into the boat. Look alive! the breeze is freshening."

The men instantly raised me shoulder high, and, hurrying down the rocks, tossed me into the bottom of the boat, where I lay for some time, stunned with the violence of my fall.

On recovering sufficiently to raise myself on my elbow, I perceived that we were already outside the coral reef, and close alongside the schooner, which was of small size and clipper built. I had only time to observe this much, when I received a severe kick on the side from one of the men, who ordered me, in a rough voice, to jump aboard. Rising hastily, I clambered up the side. In a few minutes the boat was hoisted on deck, the vessel's head put close to the wind, and the Coral Island dropped slowly astern, as we beat up against a head sea.

Immediately after coming aboard, the crew were too busily engaged in working the ship and getting in the boat to attend to me, so I remained leaning against the bulwarks close to the gangway, watching them.

But my thoughts soon turned to the dear companions whom I had left on shore; and as I looked towards the Coral Island, which was now far away to leeward, I sighed deeply, and the tears rolled slowly down my cheeks as I thought that I might never see them more.

"So you're blubbering, are you, you obstinate whelp?" said the deep voice of the captain, as he came up and gave me a box on the ear that nearly felled me to the deck. "I don't allow any such weakness aboard o' this ship. So clap a stopper on your eyes or I'll give you something to cry for."

I flushed with indignation at this rough and cruel treatment, but felt that giving way to anger would only make matters worse; so I made no reply, but took out my handkerchief and dried my eyes.

"I thought you were made of better stuff," continued the captain angrily; "I'd rather have a mad bull-dog aboard than a water-eyed puppy. But I'll cure you, lad, or introduce you to the sharks before long. Now go below, and stay there till I call you."

As I walked forward to obey, my eye fell on a small keg standing by the side of the mainmast, on which the word *gunpowder* was written in pencil. It immediately flashed across me that, as we were beating up against the wind, anything floating in the sea would be driven on the reef encircling the Coral Island. I also recollected that my old companions had a pistol. Without a moment's hesitation, therefore, I lifted the keg from the deck and tossed it into the sea. An exclamation of surprise burst from the captain and some of the men who had witnessed this act of mine.

Striding up to me and uttering fearful curses, the captain raised his hand to strike me, while he shouted, 'Boy! whelp! what mean you by that?"

"If you lower your hand," said I, in a loud voice, while I felt the blood rush to my temples, "I'll tell you. Until you do so I'm dumb!"

The captain stepped back and regarded me with a look of amazement.

"Now," I continued, "I threw that keg into the sea because the wind and waves will carry it to my friends on the Coral Island, who happen to have a pistol, but no powder. I hope that it will reach them soon, and my only regret is that the keg was not a bigger one. Moreover, pirate, you said just now that you thought I was made of better stuff. I don't know what stuff I am made of,—I never thought much about that subject; but I'm quite certain of this, that I am made of such stuff as the like of you shall never tame, though you should do your worst."

To my surprise the captain, instead of flying into a rage, smiled, and, thrusting his hand into the big shawl that encircled his waist, turned on his heel and walked aft, while I went below.

Here, instead of being rudely handled, as I had expected, the men received me with a shout of laughter, and one of them, patting me on the back, said, "Well done, lad! you're a brick. and I have no doubt will turn out a rare cove."

During the remainder of the afternoon I was left to my own reflections, which were anything but agreeable, for I could not banish from my mind the threat about the thumb-screws. I was still meditating on my unhappy fate when, just after nightfall, one of the watch on deck called down the hatchway,—

"Hallo there! one o'you, tumble up and light the cabin lamp, and send that boy aft to the captain—sharp!"

"Now then, do you hear, youngster? the captain wants you. Look alive," said Bill, raising his huge frame from the locker on which he had been asleep for the last two hours. He sprang up the ladder and I instantly followed him, and, going aft, was shown into the cabin by one of the men, who closed the door after me.

A small silver lamp which hung from a beam threw a dim soft light over the cabin, which was small and comfortable, but plainly furnished. Seated on a camp-stool at the table, and busily engaged in examining a chart of the Pacific, was the captain, who looked up as I entered, and, in a quiet voice, bade me be seated. Then he threw down his pencil, and rising from the table stretched himself on a sofa at the upper end of the cabin.

"Boy," said he, looking me full in the face, "what is your name?"

"Ralph Rover," I replied.

"Where did you come from, and how came you to be on that island? How many companions had you on it? Answer me, now, and mind you tell no lies."

"I never tell lies," said I, firmly. I then told him the history of myself and my companions from the time we sailed till the day of his visit to the island, taking care, however, to make no mention of the Diamond Cave. After I had concluded, he was silent for a few minutes; then, looking up, he said, "Boy, I believe you."

I was surprised at this remark, for I could not imagine why he should not believe me. However, I made no reply.

"And what," continued the captain, "makes you think that this schooner is a pirate?"

"The black flag," said I, "showed me what you are; and if any further proof was wanting, I have had it in the brutal treatment I have received at your hands."

The captain frowned as I spoke, but curbing his anger he continued, "Boy, you are too bold. I admit that we treated you roughly, but that was because you made us lose time, and gave us a good deal of trouble. As to the black flag, that is merely a joke that my fellows play off upon people sometimes, in order to frighten them. It is their humour, and does no harm. I am no pirate, boy, but a lawful trader,

—a rough one, I grant you, but one can't help that in these seas, where there are so many pirates on the water and such murderous blackguards on the land. I carry on a trade in sandal-wood with the Feejee Islands; and if you choose, Ralph, to behave decently, I'll take you along with me and give you a good share of the profits. You see, I'm in want of an honest boy like you, to look after the cabin and keep the log, and see to the traffic on shore sometimes. What say you, Ralph? Would you like to become a sandal-wood trader?"

I was much surprised at this explanation, and a good deal relieved to find that the vessel, after all, was not a pirate; but instead of replying, I said, "If it be as you state, then why did you take me from my island, and why do you not take me back?"

The captain smiled as he replied, "I took you off in anger, boy, and I'm sorry for it. I would even now take you back, but we are too far away from it. See, there it is," he added, laying his finger on the chart, "and we are now here—fifty miles away at least. It would not be fair to my men to put about now, for they have all an interest in the trade."

I could make no reply to this; so, after a little more conversation, I agreed to become one of the crew, at least until we could reach some civilized island where I might be put ashore.

From Coral Island—Adapted

STUDY NOTES.

Part II.

1. Find the part telling you who it was that had captured Ralph. What did Ralph say that shows you he was at first very frightened?

2. Why was Ralph ordered to light a fire on a certain point of the island? What happened shortly afterwards?

3. What did Ralph say that shows you he was very brave?

4. What makes you think that the captain was very cruel?

5. Tell what happened to Ralph after he had been put aboard the schooner?

6. What explanation did the captain give for pretending that the schooner was a pirate ship, and for kidnapping Ralph?

Word-Study:

whelp: puppy.

burning-glass: a lens used for producing great heat: it brings the sun's rays to a point.

ruse (rhymes with crews): a trick.

scheme (skeem): plan.

bul'-warks (bul'-wurks): the sides of a ship above the upper deck.

dis'-ci-pline (dis'-si-plin): control.

lee'-ward (lu'-erd): in the direction toward which the wind blows.

ob'-stin-ate: stubborn; unyielding.

cove: a slang expression, meaning fellow.

med'-i-ta'-ting: pondering over; reflecting.

LUCY GRAY.

Wordsworth is often called our great nature poet because he loved to sing of the beauties of nature—of hill and vale, of stream and sky, of flower and bird. But he also sings of the simple joys and sorrows of country life. In Lucy Gray he tells of a great sorrow that fell on a lonely country home, and he makes us feel deep sympathy with the grief-stricken parents.

William Wordsworth.

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray,
  And when I cross'd the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
  The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
  She dwelt on a wide moor,
The sweetest thing that ever grew
  Beside a human door.

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
  The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
  Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night—
  You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, child, to light
  Your mother through the snow."

"That, father, will I gladly do;
  'Tis scarcely afternoon—
The Minster-clock has just struck two,
  And yonder is the moon!"

At this the father raised his hook,
  And snapp'd a fagot-band;
He plied his work;—and Lucy took
  The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain-roe;
  With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
  That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time;
  She wander'd up and down;
And many a hill did Lucy climb,
  But never reach'd the town.

The wretched parents all that night
  Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
  To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
  That overlook'd the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood
  A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried
  "In heaven we all shall meet!"
When in the snow the mother spied
  The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downward from the steep hill's edge
  They track'd the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
  And by the long stone wall.

And then an open field they cross'd:
  The marks were still the same;
They track'd them on, nor ever lost;
  And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
  Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank;
  And further there were none!

Yet some maintain that to this day
  She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
  Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
  And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
  That whistles in the wind.

STUDY NOTES.

1. What verses picture Lucy as a lonely yet lovable child?

2. Read the verses that describe the anxiety and grief of the parents.

3. What discovery does the mother make that renews her hope?

4. Where does the search end?

5. Complete the following sentence:—Nothing certain is known of Lucy's fate, and consequently some people who had been accustomed to see this sweet happy child in the lonesome wild still believe . . . . . .

6. What do you think it is that continues to live upon the lonesome wild—the real Lucy Gray or the spirit of

The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door.

Word-Study:

fawn: a young deer.
minster-clock: church-clock.
faggot-band: a bundle of sticks.
main-tain': assert; say.

THE WHITE TROUT.

Samuel Lover.

There was once upon a time, long ago, a beautiful lady who lived in a castle upon the lake beyond. And they say she was promised to a king's son, and they were to be married, when, all of a sudden, he was murdered (Lord help us!) and thrown into the lake beyond. So, of course, he couldn't keep his promise to the fairy lady—and more's the pity.

Well, the story goes that she went out of her mind, because of losing the king's son—for she was tender-hearted, (God help her!) like the rest of us—and she pined away, until at last no one saw her about at all; and the story went that the fairies had taken her away.

Well, sir, in the course of time, the White Trout (God bless it!) was seen in the stream beyond; and indeed the people didn't know what to think of the creature, for a *white* trout had never been heard of before. Yet, there it remained for years and years—much longer than I could tell—and, indeed, beyond the memory of the oldest in the village.

At last the people began to think it must be a fairy; for what else could it be? And no hurt or harm was ever done the white trout until some wicked soldiers came to these parts. They laughed at all the people, and gibed and jeered

at them for thinking such things. One of them in particular (bad luck to him!) swore he would catch the trout and eat it for his dinner.

Well, would you believe the villainy of the soldier? He did, indeed, catch the trout, and off he went home, put the frying pan on the fire, and in he threw the pretty little thing. The trout squealed just like a Christian creature, and, my dear, you'd have thought the soldier would have split his sides laughing—for he was a hardened villain. When he thought one side was done, he turned it over to fry the other; and what do you think? Not the slightest sign of a burn was on it at all. The soldier thought it was a queer trout that couldn't be fried.

"I'll give it another turn by and by," said he, little thinking what was in store for him, the heathen!

Well, when he thought that side was done, he turned it again, and lo and behold! it was not a bit better done than the first side.

"Bad luck to me," said the soldier, "but that beats the world! Still, I'll try you again, my darling, cunning though you think yourself." With that he turned it, and turned it, but there was not a sign of the fire on the pretty trout.

"Well," said the desperate villain, "well, my jolly little trout, may be you're fried

enough, though you don't look over well done. But you may taste better than you look: and perhaps you're a tit-bit after all." With that he took up his knife and fork to taste a piece of the trout; but, my jewel, the minute he put his knife into the fish there was a murderous shriek, and the trout jumped out of the frying pan into the middle of the floor. And on the spot where it fell, up rose a lovely lady—the most beautiful creature that ever the eye beheld. She was dressed in white, with a band of gold on her hair, and there was a stream of blood running down her arm.

"Look where you cut me, you villain!" said she. And she held out her arm to him—and, oh dear, he thought the sight would leave his eyes.

"Couldn't you leave me cool and comfortable in the river where you snared me, and not disturb me in my duty?" said she.

He trembled like a dog in a wet sack. At last he stammered out a few words. He asked her ladyship's pardon, and begged her to spare his life. He did not know she was on duty, he said. Otherwise he would have known better than to interfere, for he was himself a good soldier.

"I *was* on duty, then," said the lady. "I was watching for my true love that is coming to me by water. And if he comes while I'm away, and I miss him, I'll turn you into a pin-

keen, and I'll hunt you up and down for ever more, while grass grows or water runs."

Well, the soldier almost died at the thought of being turned into a pinkeen, and he begged for mercy. Then the lady said:

"Give up your evil ways, you villain, or you'll repent it too late. Be a good man for the future, and go to your duty regularly," said she. "And now take me back, and put me into the river again where you found me."

"Oh, my lady!" said the soldier, "how could I have the heart to drown a beautiful lady like you?"

But before he could say another word, the lady vanished, and there he saw the little trout on the ground. Well, he put it on a clean plate, and off he went for dear life, for fear her lover would come while she was away. He ran and ran till he came to the cave again, and he threw the trout into the river. As soon as he did so, the river became as red as blood for a little while (by reason of the cut, I suppose), till the stream washed the stain away. And to this day there's a little red mark on the trout's side, where it was cut.

Well, sir, from that day onwards the soldier was a different man. He reformed his ways, and went to his duty regularly and fasted three times a week. But it was never fish that he ate on fasting days.

Adapted.

STUDY NOTES.

1. An Irishman is telling this story. What makes you think that the story is an old one? What prevented the king's son from marrying the lady who lived in a castle on a lake? What happened to the lady? How do you know that she was a fairy?

2. Tell the story as the soldier might afterwards have told it to one of his friends.

3. Why did the lady want to be put back into the river? What did she do that made the soldier obey her?

4. You are told that a trout has a little red mark on its side: why is this?

Word-Study:

vil'-lain-y (vil'-lin-y): great wickedness.
gibed (jibed): mocked.
jeered: taunted; mocked.
the sight would leave his eyes: he would become blind.

THE NORMAN BARON.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

In his chamber, weak and dying,
Was the Norman baron lying;
Loud, without, the tempest thundered
And the castle-turret shook.

In this fight was Death the gainer,
Spite of vassal and retainer,
And the lands his sires had plundered,
Written in the Doomsday Book.

By his bed a monk was seated,
Who in humble voice repeated
Many a prayer and pater-noster,
From the missal on his knee.

And, amid the tempest pealing,
Sounds of bells came faintly stealing,
Bells that from the neighbouring kloster
Rang for the Nativity.

In the hall, the serf and vassal
Held, that night, their Christmas wassail;
Many a carol, old and saintly,
Sang the minstrel and the waits.

And so loud these Saxon gleemen
Sang to slaves the songs of freemen,
That the storm was heard but faintly
Knocking at the castle-gates.

Till at length the lays they chanted
Reached the chamber terror-haunted,
Where the monk, with accents holy,
Whispered in the baron's ear.

Tears upon his eyelids glistened
As he paused awhile and listened,
And the dying baron slowly
Turned his weary head to hear.

"Wassail for the kingly stranger
Born and cradled in a manger!
King, like David, priest, like Aaron,
Christ is born to set us free!"

And the lightning showed the sainted
Figures on the casement painted,
And exclaimed the shuddering baron
"Miserere, Domine!"

In that hour of deep contrition
He beheld, with clearer vision,
Through all outward show and fashion,
Justice, the Avenger, rise.

All the pomp of earth had vanished,
Falsehood and deceit were banished,
Reason spake more loud than passion,
And the truth wore no disguise.

Every vassal of his banner,
Every serf born to his manor,
All those wronged and wretched creatures,
By his hand were freed again.

And, as on the sacred missal
He recorded their dismissal,
Death relaxed his iron features,
And the monk replied, "Amen!"

Many centuries have been numbered
Since in death the baron slumbered
By the convent's sculptured portal,
Mingling with the common dust.

But the good deed, through the ages
Living in historic pages,
Brighter grows and gleams immortal,
Unconsumed by moth or rust.

STUDY NOTES.

1. Read this poem again and again till you get the story. The first picture you see is a great Norman castle, where, in one of the rooms . . . . . Finish this sentence. What line tells you it is night time? Outside the castle a great storm is raging: what lines tell you so?

2. What lines tell you that the baron, in spite of his great power, cannot triumph over Death?

3. Complete the following unfinished sentence: Seated by the bedside of the dying baron is . . . . . who . . . . . .

4. What is the meaning of the sounds of the bells that are faintly heard in the sick room? What other sounds are heard?

5. What verse is heard by the dying baron that makes him think of the injustice done by the Norman conquerors to the English? Name some of these injustices (wrongs). What does the baron say that shows you he is sorry for his sins? What does he make up his mind to do? What verse tells you that peace comes to his soul when he sets free all his slaves?

6. What lines tell you that the good deed done by the baron will never die?

Word-Study:

vas'-sal: one who held land of the baron and who vowed fidelity (faithfulness) and homage to him.

re-tain'-er: one who was retained (kept) in the service of the baron. The retainers fought for their lord.

Doomsday book: the book in which the Norman kings kept a record of the lands held by their subjects, and of the services they were bound to give their overlords.

pa'-ter–nos'-ter: the Lord's prayer.

mis'-sal: Mass book, *i.e.*, a book containing the service of the Mass for the entire year.

Na-tiv'-i-ty: the birthday of Christ.

was'-sail (wos'-sil): an ancient custom of wishing good luck by drinking.

waits: watchmen.

klos'-ter: monastery.

mis'-e-re'-re (miz'-e-re'-re) **Dom'-i-ne:** Pity, O Lord!

con-tri'-tion (con-trish'-un): deep sorrow and repentance for sin.

sculp'-tured por'-tal: carved gateway.

im-mor'-tal: undying; eternal.

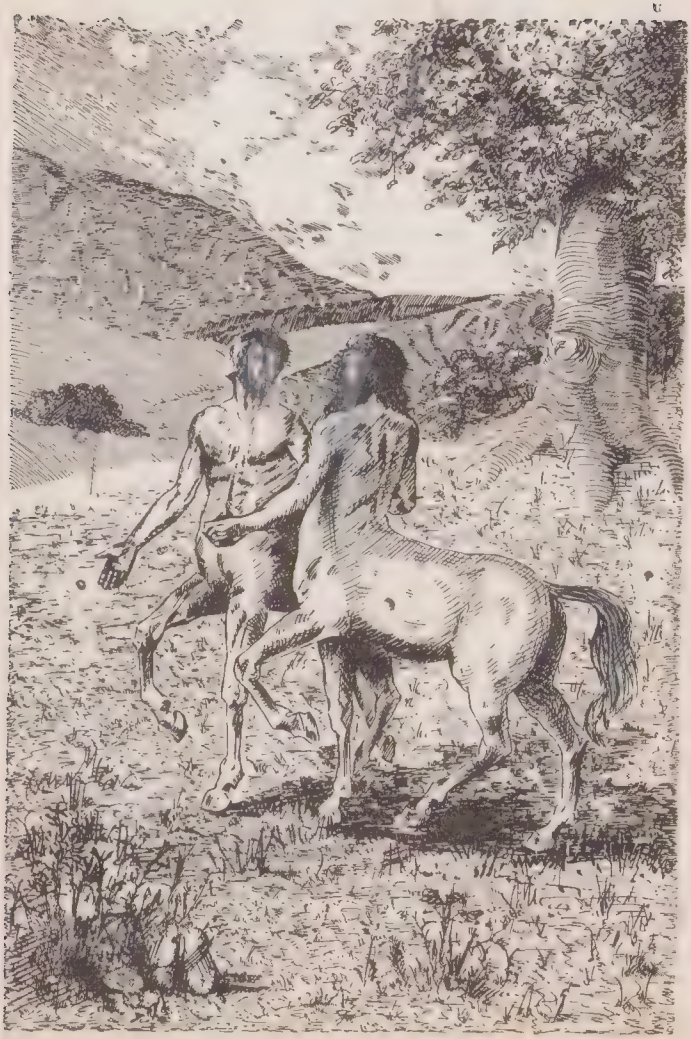
THE GOLDEN FLEECE.

Nathaniel Hawthorne—Tanglewood Tales.

Part I.

When Jason was a little boy he was sent away from his parents, and placed under the queerest schoolmaster that ever you heard of. This learned person was one of the people, or quadrupeds, called Centaurs. He lived in a cavern, and had the body and legs of a white horse, with the head and shoulders of a man. His name was Chiron; and, in spite of his odd appearance, he was a very excellent teacher, and had several scholars, who afterwards did him credit by making a great name in the world. The good Chiron taught his pupils how to play upon the harp, and how to cure diseases, and how to use the sword and shield, together with various other branches of education, in which the lads of those days used to be instructed, instead of writing and arithmetic.

I have sometimes suspected that Master Chiron was not really very different from other people, but that, being a kind-hearted and merry old fellow, he was in the habit of making believe that he was a horse, and scrambling about the schoolroom on all fours, and letting the little boys ride upon his back. And so, when his scholars had grown up, and grown old, and were trotting their grand-children on their



Centaurs.

knees, they told them about the sports of their school-days; and these young folks took the idea that their grandfathers had been taught their letters by a Centaur, half man and half horse. Little children, not quite understanding what is said to them, often get such absurd notions into their heads, you know.

Be that as it may, it has always been told for a fact (and always will be told, as long as the world lasts), that Chiron, with the head of a schoolmaster, had the body and legs of a horse. Just imagine the grave old gentleman clattering and stamping into the schoolroom on his four hoofs, perhaps treading on some little fellow's toes, flourishing his switch-tail instead of a rod, and, now and then, trotting out of doors to eat a mouthful of grass! I wonder what the blacksmith charged him for a set of iron shoes.

So Jason dwelt in the cave, with his four-footed Chiron, from the time that he was an infant, only a few months old, until he had grown to the full height of a man. He then resolved to seek his fortune in the world, without asking Chiron's advice, or telling him anything about the matter. This was very unwise, to be sure: and I hope none of you, my little hearers, will ever follow Jason's example. But, you are to understand, he had heard how that he himself was a prince royal, and how his father, King Æson, had been deprived of the kingdom of Iolchos by a certain Pelias, who would also have

killed Jason, had he not been hidden in the Centaur's cave. And, being come to the strength of a man, Jason determined to set all this business to rights, and to punish the wicked Pelias for wronging his dear father, and to cast him down from the throne, and seat himself there instead.

With this intention, he took a spear in each hand, and threw a leopard's skin over his shoulders, to keep off the rain, and set forth on his travels, with his long yellow ringlets waving in the wind. The part of his dress on which he most prided himself was a pair of sandals, that had been his father's. They were handsomely embroidered, and were tied upon his feet with strings of gold. But his whole attire was such as people did not very often see; and as he passed along, the women and children ran to the doors and windows, wondering whither this beautiful youth was journeying, with his leopard's skin and his golden-tied sandals; and what heroic deeds he meant to perform, with a spear in his right hand and another in his left.

I know not how far Jason had travelled, when he came to a turbulent river, which rushed right across his pathway, with specks of white foam among its black eddies, hurrying onward, and roaring angrily as it went. Though not a very broad river in the dry seasons of the year, it was now swollen by heavy rains and by the melting of the snow on the sides of Mount

Olympus; and it thundered so loudly, and looked so wild and dangerous, that Jason, bold as he was, thought it wise to pause upon the brink. The bed of the stream seemed to be strewn with sharp and rugged rocks, some of which thrust themselves above the water. By-and-by, an uprooted tree, with shattered branches, came drifting along the current, and got entangled among the rocks. Now and then, a drowned sheep, and once the carcass of a cow, floated past.

In short, the swollen river had already donè a great deal of mischief. It was evidently too deep for Jason to wade, and too strong for him to swim; he could see no bridge; and as for a boat, had there been any, the rocks would have broken it to pieces in an instant.

"See the poor lad," said a cracked voice close to his side. "He must have had but a poor education, since he does not know how to cross a little stream like this. Or is he afraid of wetting his fine golden-stringed sandals? It is a pity his four-footed schoolmaster is not here to carry him safely across on his back!"

Jason looked round greatly surprised, for he did not know that anybody was near. But beside him stood an old woman, with a ragged mantle over her head, leaning on a staff, the top of which was carved into the shape of a cuckoo. She looked very aged, and wrinkled, and infirm; and yet her eyes, which were as

brown as those of an ox, were so extremely large and beautiful, that, when they were fixed on Jason's eyes, he could see nothing else but them. The old woman had a pomegranate in her hand, although the fruit was then quite out of season.

"Whither are you going, Jason?" she now asked.

She seemed to know his name, you will observe; and, indeed, those great brown eyes looked as if they had a knowledge of everything, whether past or to come.

"I am going to Iolchos," answered the young man, "to bid the wicked King Pelias come down from my father's throne, and let me reign in his stead."

"Ah, well, then," said the old woman, still with the same cracked voice, "if that is all your business, you need not be in a very great hurry. Just take me on your back, there's a good youth, and carry me across the river."

"Good mother," replied Jason, "the current, as you see, is very strong; and if I should chance to stumble, it would sweep both of us away more easily than it has carried off yonder uprooted tree. I would gladly help you if I could; but I doubt whether I am strong enough to carry you across."

"Then," said she, very scornfully, "neither are you strong enough to pull King Pelias off his throne. And, Jason, unless you will help an

old woman at her need, you ought not to be a king. What are kings made for, save to help the feeble and distressed? But do as you please. Either take me on your back, or with my poor old limbs I shall try my best to struggle across the stream."

Saying this, the old woman poked with her staff in the river, as if to find the safest place in its rocky bed where she might make the first step. But Jason, by this time, had grown ashamed of his reluctance to help her. He felt that he could never forgive himself, if this poor feeble creature should come to any harm in attempting to wrestle against the headlong current. The good Chiron, whether half horse or no, had taught him that the noblest use of his strength was to assist the weak; and also that he must treat every young woman as if she were his sister, and every old one like a mother. Remembering these lessons, the vigorous and beautiful young man knelt down, and requested the good dame to mount upon his back.

"The passage seems to me not very safe," he remarked. "But I will try to carry you across. If the river sweeps you away, it shall take me too."

"Never fear," cried the old woman, "we shall get safely across."

So she threw her arms around Jason's neck; and lifting her from the ground, he stepped boldly into the raging and foamy current, and began to stagger away from the shore. Jason's

two spears, one in each hand, kept him from stumbling, and enabled him to feel his way among the hidden rocks; although, every instant, he expected that his companion and himself would go down the stream, together with the driftwood of shattered trees, and the carcasses of the sheep and cow. Down came the cold, snowy torrent from the steep side of Olympus, raging and thundering as if it had a real spite against Jason, or, at all events, were determined to snatch off his living burden from his shoulders. When he was half way across, the uprooted tree (which I have already told you about) broke loose from among the rocks, and bore down upon him, with all its splintered branches. It rushed past, however, without touching him. But the next moment his foot was caught in a crevice between two rocks, and stuck there so fast, that, in the effort to get free, he lost one of his golden stringed sandals.

At this accident Jason could not help uttering a cry of vexation.

"What is the matter?" asked the old woman.

"Matter enough," said the young man. "I have lost a sandal here among the rocks. And what sort of a figure shall I cut at the court of King Pelias, with a golden-stringed sandal on one foot, and the other foot bare!"

"Do not take it to heart," answered his companion, cheerily. "You never met with better

fortune than in losing that sandal. It satisfies me that you are the very person whom the Speaking Oak has been talking about."

There was no time, just then, to inquire what the Speaking Oak had said. But the briskness of her tone encouraged the young man; and besides, he had never in his life felt so vigorous and mighty as since taking this old woman on his back. Instead of being exhausted, he gathered strength as he went on; and, struggling up against the torrent, he at last gained the opposite shore, clambered up the bank, and set down the old dame safely on the grass. As soon as this was done, however, he could not help looking rather sadly at his bare foot, with only a remnant of the golden string of the sandal clinging round his ankle.

"You will get a handsomer pair of sandals by-and-by," said the old woman, with a kindly look out of her beautiful brown eyes. "Only let King Pelias get a glimpse of that bare foot, and you shall see him turn as pale as ashes, I promise you. There is your path. Go along, my good Jason, and my blessing go with you. And when you sit on your throne, remember the old woman whom you helped over the river."

STUDY NOTES.

PART I.

1. Tell the story of Jason's first week at Master Chiron's school, as Jason might have told it in a letter to his father.

2. How long did Jason stay at this school? Why did he leave it?

3. Tell the story of Jason's meeting with the old woman, as she might have told it to one of her friends.

Word-Study:

quad'-ru-ped: a four-footed animal.

Cen'-taur: a fabled being, half man and half horse.

Chi'-ron (Ki'-ron): one of the Centaurs; Jason's teacher.

Ae'-son (E'son): King of Iolchos: he was deposed (driven off the throne) by Pelias.

I'-ol-chos: the port in Thessaly (Greece) from which the Argonauts embarked.

Pe'-li-as: see note on Aeson.

in-firm': weak; sickly.

crev'-ice: a split, crack or rent.

rem'-nant: a part of some material left over; a scrap.

Part II.

When the old dame was out of sight, Jason set forward on his journey. After travelling a pretty long distance, he came to a town situated at the foot of a mountain, and not a great way from the shore of the sea. On the outside of the town there was an immense crowd of people, not only men and women, but children too, all in their best clothes, and evidently enjoying a holiday. The crowd was thickest towards the sea-shore; and in that direction, over the people's heads, Jason saw a wreath of smoke curling upward to the blue sky. He inquired of one of the multitude what town it was, near by, and why so many persons were here assembled together.

"This is the kingdom of Iolchos," answered the man, "and we are the subjects of King

Pelias. Our monarch has summoned us together, that we may see him sacrifice a black bull to Neptune, who, they say, is his Majesty's father. Yonder is the king, where you see the smoke going up from the altar."

While the man spoke he eyed Jason with great curiosity; for his garb was quite unlike that of the Iolchians, and it looked very odd to see a youth with a leopard's skin over his shoulders, and each hand grasping a spear. Jason perceived, too, that the man stared particularly at his feet, one of which, you remember, was bare, while the other was decorated with his father's golden stringed sandal.

"Look at him! only look at him!" said the man to his next-door neighbour. "Do you see? He wears but one sandal!"

Upon this, first one person, and then another, began to stare at Jason, and everybody seemed to be greatly struck with something in his aspect; though they turned their eyes much oftener towards his feet than to any other part of his figure. Besides, he could hear them whispering to one another.

"One sandal! One sandal!" they kept saying. "The man with one sandal! Here he is at last! Whence has he come? What does he mean to do? What will the king say to the one-sandalled man?"

Poor Jason was greatly abashed, and made up his mind that the people of Iolchos were exceedingly ill-bred, to take such public notice of

the loss of one of his sandals. Meanwhile, he soon found himself close to the smoking altar, where King Pelias was sacrificing the black bull.

"Who are you?" cried the king, with a terrible frown. "And how dare you make this disturbance while I am sacrificing a black bull to my father Neptune?"

"It is no fault of mine," answered Jason. "Your Majesty must blame the rudeness of your subjects, who have raised all this tumult because one of my feet happens to be bare."

When Jason said this, the king gave a quick, startled glance down at his feet.

"Ha!" muttered he, "here is the one-sandalled fellow, sure enough! What can I do with him?"

And he clutched more closely the great knife in his hand, as if he were half in mind to slay Jason instead of the black bull. The people round about caught up the king's words, indistinctly as they were uttered; and first there was a murmur among them, and then a loud shout.

"The one-sandalled man has come! The prophecy must be fulfilled!"

For you are to know that, many years before, King Pelias had been told by the Speaking Oak that a man with one sandal should cast him down from his throne. On this account, he had given strict orders that nobody should ever

come into his presence, unless both sandals were securely tied upon his feet; and he kept an officer in his palace, whose sole business it was to examine people's sandals, and to supply them with a new pair, free of charge, as soon as the old ones began to wear out. In the whole course of the king's reign, he had never been thrown into such a fright and agitation as by the spectacle of poor Jason's bare foot. But, as he was naturally a bold and hard-hearted man, he soon took courage, and began to consider in what way he might rid himself of this terrible one-sandalled stranger.

"My good young man," said King Pelias, taking the softest tone imaginable, in order to throw Jason off his guard, "you are very welcome to my kingdom. Judging by your dress, you must have travelled a long distance; for it is not the fashion to wear leopard skins in this part of the world. Pray, what name may I call you? and where did you receive your education?"

"My name is Jason," answered the young stranger. "Ever since my infancy, I have dwelt in the cave of Chiron the Centaur. He was my instructor, and taught me music, and horsemanship, and how to cure wounds, and likewise how to inflict wounds with my weapons!"

"I have heard of Chiron the schoolmaster," replied King Pelias, "and how that there is an immense deal of learning and wisdom in his head, although it happens to be set on a horse's

body. It gives me great delight to see one of his scholars at my court. But, to test how much you have profited under so excellent a teacher, will you allow me to ask you a single question?"

"I do not pretend to be very wise," said Jason. "But ask me what you please, and I will answer to the best of my ability."

Now King Pelias meant cunningly to entrap the young man, and to make him say something that should be the cause of mischief and destruction to himself. So with a crafty and evil smile upon his face, he spoke as follows:—

"What would you do, brave Jason, if there were a man in the world, by whom, as you had reason to believe, you were doomed to be ruined and slain—what would you do, I say, if that man stood before you and in your power?"

"I would send such a man," said he, "in quest of the Golden Fleece!"

This enterprise, you will understand, was, of all others, the most difficult and dangerous in the world. In the first place, it would be necessary to make a long voyage through unknown seas. There was hardly a hope, or a possibility, that any young man, who should undertake this voyage, would either succeed in obtaining the Golden Fleece, or would survive to return home, and tell of the perils he had run. The eyes of King Pelias sparkled with joy, therefore, when he heard Jason's reply.

"Well said, wise man with the one sandal!" cried he. "Go, then, and at the peril of your life bring me back the Golden Fleece."

"I go," answered Jason quietly. "If I fail, you need not fear that I will ever come back to trouble you again. But if I return to Iolchos with the prize, then, King Pelias, you must hasten down from your lofty throne, and give me your crown and sceptre."

"That I will," said the king, with a sneer. "Meantime, I will keep them very safely for you."

STUDY NOTES.

PART II.

1. Why was King Pelias so angry when he first saw Jason?

2. What makes you think that King Pelias was very cunning?

3. Tell the story of the meeting of Jason and King Pelias, as Jason might afterwards have told it to Chiron, his old schoolmaster.

4. What made the quest (search) of the Golden Fleece so dangerous?

Word-Study:

as'-pect: appearance.

a-bashed': crestfallen; shamed.

sac'-ri-fice (fice): an offering of anything to God or to a god.

tu'-mult: uproar; noise; confusion.

proph'-e-cy (prof'e-sy; sy rhymes with ty in pity): a foretelling.

sur-vive': to outlive or outlast.

scep'-tre (sep'-ter): a staff or baton borne by a sovereign as an emblem (sign) of his or her authority (power).

Part III.

The first thing that Jason did, after he left the king's presence, was to go to Dodona, and inquire of the Talking Oak what course it was best to pursue.

"What shall I do," said he, "in order to win the Golden Fleece?"

"Go to Argus, the shipbuilder," answered the Talking Oak, "and bid him build a galley with fifty oars."

Then the voice melted again into the indistinct murmur of the rustling leaves, and died gradually away. When it was quite gone, Jason felt inclined to doubt whether he had actually heard the words, or whether his fancy had not shaped them out of the ordinary sound made by a breeze, while passing through the thick foliage of the tree.

But on inquiry among the people of Iolchos, he found that there was really a man in the city, by the name of Argus, who was a very skilful builder of vessels. At Jason's request, Argus readily consented to build him a galley so big that it should require fifty strong men to row it; although no vessel of such a size and burden had heretofore been seen in the world. So the head carpenter and all his assistants began their work; and for a good while afterwards, there they were, busily employed, hewing out the timbers, and making a great clatter with their hammers, until the new ship, which was

called the Argo, seemed to be quite ready for sea. And, as the Talking Oak had already given him such good advice, Jason thought that it would not be amiss to ask for a little more. He visited it again, therefore, and standing beside its huge, rough trunk, inquired what he should do next.

After a while, Jason observed that the foliage of a great branch which stretched above his head had begun to rustle, as if the wind were stirring that one bough, while all the other boughs of the oak were at rest.

"Cut me off!" said the branch, as soon as it could speak distinctly; "cut me off! cut me off! and carve me into a figure head for your galley."

Accordingly, Jason took the branch at its word, and lopped it off the tree. A carver in the neighbourhood engaged to make the figure-head. When the work was finished, it turned out to be the figure of a beautiful woman with a helmet on her head, from beneath which the long ringlets fell down upon her shoulders.

Jason was delighted with the oaken image, and gave the carver no rest until it was set up where a figure-head has always stood, from that time to this, in the vessel's prow.

"And now," cried he, as he stood gazing at the calm, majestic face of the statue, "I must go to the Talking Oak, and inquire what next to do."

"There is no need of that, Jason," said a voice which, though it was far lower, reminded him of the mighty tones of the great oak. "When you desire good advice, you can seek it of me."

Jason had been looking straight into the face of the image when these words were spoken. But he could hardly believe either his ears or his eyes. The truth was, however, that the oaken lips had moved, and, to all appearance, the voice had proceeded from the statue's mouth. Recovering a little from his surprise, Jason bethought himself that the image had been carved out of the wood of the Talking Oak, and that, therefore, it was really no great wonder that it should be able to speak. It would have been very odd, indeed, if it had not. But certainly it was a great piece of good fortune that he should be able to carry so wise a block of wood along with him in his perilous voyage.

"Tell me, wondrous image," exclaimed Jason,—"since you inherit the wisdom of the Speaking Oak of Dodona, whose daughter you are,—tell me, where shall I find fifty bold youths, who will take each of them an oar of my galley? They must have sturdy arms to row, and brave hearts to encounter perils, or we shall never win the Golden Fleece."

"Go," replied the oaken image, "go, summon all the heroes of Greece."

And, in fact, considering what a great deal was to be done, could any advice be wiser than

this which Jason received from the figure-head of his vessel? He lost no time in sending messengers to all the cities, and making known to the whole people of Greece that Prince Jason, the son of King Æson, was going in quest of the Fleece of Gold, and that he desired the help of forty-nine of the bravest and strongest young men alive to row his vessel and share his dangers. And Jason himself would be the fiftieth.

At this news, the adventurous youths, all over the country, began to bestir themselves. Many of them had been educated by Chiron, the four-footed schoolmaster, and were therefore old schoolmates of Jason, and knew him to be a lad of spirit.

Jason appointed Tiphys to be helmsman, because he was a star-gazer, and knew the points of the compass. Lynceus, on account of his sharp sight, was stationed as a look out in the prow, where he saw a whole day's sail ahead, but was rather apt to overlook things that lay directly under his nose. If the sea only happened to be deep enough, however, Lynceus could tell you exactly what kind of rocks or sand was at the bottom of it; and he often cried out to his companions that they were sailing over heaps of sunken treasure, which yet he was none the richer for beholding. To confess the truth, few people believed him when he said it.

Well! But when the Argonauts, as these fifty brave adventurers were called, had prepared everything for the voyage, an unforeseen difficulty threatened to end it before it was begun. The vessel, you must understand, was so long, and broad, and heavy, that the united force of all the fifty was insufficient to shove her into the water. Hercules, I suppose, had not grown to his full strength, else he might have set her afloat as easily as a little boy launches his boat upon a puddle. But here were these fifty heroes, pushing, and straining, and growing red in the face, without making the Argo start an inch. At last, quite wearied out, they sat themselves down on the shore, very crestfallen, and thinking that the vessel must be left to rot and fall in pieces, and that they must either swim across the sea or lose the Golden Fleece.

All at once, Jason bethought himself of the galley's wonderful figure-head.

"O daughter of the Talking Oak," cried he, "how shall we set to work to get our vessel into the water?"

"Seat yourselves," answered the image (for it had known what ought to be done from the very first, and was only waiting for the question to be put)—"seat yourselves, and handle your oars, and let Orpheus play upon his harp."

Immediately the fifty heroes got on board, and seizing their oars, held them upright in the air, while Orpheus (who liked such a task far better than rowing) swept his fingers across

the harp. At the first ringing note of the music, they felt the vessel stir. Orpheus thrummed away briskly, and the galley slid at once into the sea, dipping her prow so deeply that the figure-head drank the wave with its marvellous lips, and rose again as buoyant as a swan. The rowers plied their fifty oars; the white foam boiled up before the prow; the water gurgled and bubbled in their wake; while Orpheus continued to play so lively a strain of music, that the vessel seemed to dance over the billows by way of keeping time to it. Thus triumphantly did the Argo sail out of the harbour, amidst the cheers and good wishes of everybody except the wicked old Pelias, who stood on a cliff, scowling at her, and wishing that he could blow out of his lungs the tempest of wrath that was in his heart, and so sink the galley with all on board. When they had sailed above fifty miles over the sea, Lynceus happened to cast his sharp eyes behind, and said that there was this bad-hearted king, still perched upon the cliff, and scowling so gloomily that it looked like a black thunder cloud in that quarter of the horizon.

STUDY NOTES.

PART III.

1. How did the Talking Oak greatly help Jason to go in search of the Golden Fleece?

2. When the Argo was built, a new difficulty arose for Jason: what was it? To whom did he go for advice? What was he told to do?

3. Why was Tiphys such a good helmsman? Why was Lynceus made lookout-man?

4. When the crew had been selected a very great difficulty arose: what was it? How was it solved?

Word-Study:

fo'-li-age: leaves.

prow: the front part of a boat; the bow.

won'-drous (won'-drus): full of wonder.

in-her'-it: to receive by birth; to come into possession of.

Ti'-phys (Ti'-fis): Greek proper name.

Lyn'-ce-us (Lin'-se-us): Greek proper name.

Or'-pheus (Or'-fuce): famed for his skill in playing on the harp.

buoy'-ant (boy'-ant): able to float on the water.

Part IV.

The Argonauts sailed onward, and met with many wonderful adventures, any one of which would make a story by itself. At one time, they landed on an island, and were resting on the grass, when suddenly a shower of steel-headed arrows began to fall on them. Some of them stuck in the ground, while others hit against their shields, and several penetrated their flesh. The fifty heroes started up, and looked about them for the hidden enemy, but could find none, nor see any spot, on the whole island, where even a single archer could lie hidden. Still, however, the steel-headed arrows came whizzing among them; and, at last, happening to look upward, they beheld a large flock of birds, hovering and wheeling aloft, and shooting their feathers down upon the Argonauts. These feathers were the steel-headed

arrows that had so tormented them. There was no possibility of making any resistance; and the fifty heroic Argonauts might all have been killed or wounded by a flock of troublesome birds, without ever setting eyes on the Golden Fleece, if Jason had not thought of asking the advice of the oaken image.

So he ran to the galley as fast as his legs would carry him.

"O daughter of the Speaking Oak," cried he, all out of breath, "we need your wisdom more than ever before! We are in great peril from a flock of birds, who are shooting us with their steel-pointed feathers. What can we do to drive them away?"

"Make a clatter on your shields," said the image.

On receiving this excellent advice, Jason hurried back to his companions and bade them strike with their swords upon their brazen shields. Forthwith the fifty heroes set heartily to work, banging with might and main, and raised such a terrible clatter that the birds made what haste they could to get away; and though they had shot half the feathers out of their wings, they were soon seen skimming among the clouds, a long distance off, and looking like a flock of wild geese.

While the Argonauts remained on this island, they saw a small vessel approaching the shore, in which were two young men of princely bearing, and exceedingly handsome, as young

princes generally were in those days. Now, who do you imagine these two voyagers turned out to be? Why, if you will believe me, they were the sons of that very Phrixus, who, in his childhood, had been carried to Colchis, on the back of the golden fleeced ram. Since that time, Phrixus had married the king's daughter; and the two young princes had been born and brought up at Colchis, and had spent their play-days in the outskirts of the grove, in the centre of which the Golden Fleece was hanging upon a tree. They were now on their way to Greece, in hopes of getting back a kingdom that had been wrongfully taken from their father.

When the princes understood whither the Argonauts were going, they offered to turn back and guide them to Colchis. At the same time, however, they spoke as if it were very doubtful whether Jason would succeed in getting the Golden Fleece. According to their account, the tree on which it hung was guarded by a terrible dragon, who never failed to devour, at one mouthful, every person who might venture within his reach.

"There are other difficulties in the way," continued the young princes. "But is not this enough? Ah, brave Jason, turn back before it is too late. It would grieve us to the heart, if you and your nine and forty brave companions should be eaten up, at fifty mouthfuls, by this dreadful dragon."

"My young friends," quietly replied Jason, "I do not wonder that you think the dragon very terrible. You have grown up from childhood in the fear of this monster, and therefore still regard him with the fear that children feel for the bugbears and hobgoblins which their nurses have talked to them about. But, in my view of the matter, the dragon is merely a pretty large serpent who is not half so likely to snap me up at one mouthful as I am to cut off his ugly head, and strip the skin from his body. At all events, turn back who may, I will never see Greece again unless I carry with me the Golden Fleece."

"We will none of us turn back!" cried his nine and forty brave comrades. "Let us get on board the galley this instant; and if the dragon is to make a breakfast of us, much good may it do him."

And Orpheus (whose custom it was to set everything to music) began to harp and sing most gloriously, and made every mother's son of them feel as if nothing in this world were so delightful as to fight dragons, and nothing so truly honourable as to be eaten up at one mouthful, in case of the worst.

After this (being now under the guidance of the two princes, who were well acquainted with the way), they quickly sailed to Colchis. When the king of the country, whose name was Æetes, heard of their arrival, he instantly summoned Jason to court.

"You are welcome, brave Jason," said King Æetes. "Pray, are you on a pleasure voyage?—or are you in search of some unknown islands?—or what other cause has procured me the happiness of seeing you at my court?"

"Great sir," replied Jason, "I have come hither with a purpose which I now beg your Majesty's permission to carry out. King Pelias, who sits on my father's throne (to which he has no more right than to the one on which your excellent Majesty is now seated), has engaged to come down from it, and to give me his crown and sceptre, provided I bring him the Golden Fleece. This, as your Majesty is aware, is now hanging on a tree here at Colchis; and I humbly seek your gracious leave to take it away."

In spite of himself, the king's face twisted itself into an angry frown; for, above all things else in the world, he prized the Golden Fleece, and was even suspected of having done a very wicked act, in order to get it into his own possession. It put him into the worst possible humour, therefore, to hear that the gallant Prince Jason, and forty-nine of the bravest young warriors of Greece, had come to Colchis with the sole purpose of taking away his chief treasure.

"Do you know," asked King Æetes, eyeing Jason very sternly, "what are the conditions which you must fulfil before getting possession of the Golden Fleece."

"I have heard," replied the youth, "that a dragon lies beneath the tree on which the prize hangs, and that whoever approaches him runs the risk of being devoured at a mouthful."

"True," said the king, with a smile that did not look particularly good-natured. "Very true, young man. But there are other things as hard, or perhaps a little harder, to be done, before you can even have the honour of being devoured by the dragon. For example, you must first tame my two brazen-footed and brazen-lunged bulls, which Vulcan, the wonderful blacksmith, made for me. There is a furnace in each of their stomachs; and they breathe such hot fire out of their mouths and nostrils, that nobody has hitherto gone nigh them without being instantly burned to a small, black cinder. What do you think of this, my brave Jason?"

"I must encounter the peril," answered Jason, calmly, "since it stands in the way of my purpose."

"After taming the fiery bulls," continued King Æetes, who was determined to scare Jason, if possible, "you must yoke them to a plough, and must plough the sacred earth in the grove of Mars, and sow some of the same dragon's teeth from which Cadmus raised a crop of armed men. They are an unruly set, those sons of the dragon's teeth; and unless you treat them suitably, they will fall upon you sword in hand. You and your nine and

forty Argonauts, my bold Jason, are hardly numerous or strong enough to fight with such a host as will spring up."

"My master, Chiron," replied Jason, "taught me, long ago, the story of Cadmus. Perhaps I can manage the quarrelsome sons of the dragon's teeth as well as Cadmus did."

"I wish the dragon had him," muttered King Æetes to himself, "and his four-footed schoolmaster, into the bargain. Why, what a foolhardy, self-conceited coxcomb he is! We'll see what my fire-breathing bulls will do for him. Well, Prince Jason," he continued, aloud, "make yourself comfortable for to-day, and to-morrow morning, since you insist upon it, you shall try your skill at the plough."

STUDY NOTES.

PART IV.

1. What was the first wonderful adventure the Argonauts met with? Complete the following unfinished sentence: The Argonauts might all have been killed but for the assistance . . . . . .

2. What advice did the two princes give Jason? How was Jason able to find his way so easily to Colchis?

3. Tell how the King of Colchis endeavoured to turn Jason aside from his search for the Golden Fleece.

Word-Study:

Ar'-go-nauts: those who sailed in the Argo.

hov'-er-ing (hov'-er-ing): hanging fluttering in the air or on the wing.

Col-chis (Kol'kis): on the east coast of the Black Sea, now called Trans Caucasia.

Ae-e'-tes (E-e'-teez): Greek proper name.

Cad'-mus: the founder of Thebes (Thebz). He killed a dragon and sowed its teeth from which armed men sprang up and slew one another, with the exception of five who became the ancestors of the Thebians.

Part V.

While the king talked with Jason, a beautiful young woman was standing behind the throne. She fixed her eyes earnestly upon the youthful stranger and listened attentively to every word that was spoken; and when Jason withdrew from the king's presence, this young woman followed him out of the room.

"I am the king's daughter," she said to him, "and my name is Medea. I know a great deal of which other young princesses are ignorant, and can do many things which they would be afraid so much as to dream of. If you will trust to me, I can instruct you how to tame the fiery bulls, and sow the dragon's teeth, and get the Golden Fleece."

"Indeed, beautiful princess," answered Jason, "if you will do me this service, I promise to be grateful to you my whole life long. But how can you help me to do the things of which you speak? Are you an enchantress?"

"Yes, Prince Jason," answered Medea, with a smile, "you have hit upon the truth. I am an enchantress. Circe, my father's sister, taught me to be one, and I could tell you, if I pleased, who was the old woman whom you carried over the river; and, likewise, who it is that speaks through the lips of the oaken image that stands in the prow of your galley. I am acquainted with some of your secrets, you

perceive. It is well for you that I am favourably inclined; for, otherwise, you would hardly escape being snapped up by the dragon."

"I should not so much care for the dragon," replied Jason, "if I only knew how to manage the brazen-footed and fiery-lunged bulls."

"If you are as brave as I think you are, and as you have need to be," said Medea, "your own bold heart will teach you that there is but one way of dealing with a mad bull. What it is I leave you to find out in the moment of peril. As for the fiery breath of these animals, I have a charmed ointment here, which will prevent you from being burned up, and cure you, if you chance to be a little scorched."

So she put a golden box into his hand, and directed him how to apply the ointment which it contained, and where to meet her at midnight.

"Only be brave," added she, "and before daybreak the brazen bulls shall be tamed."

The young man assured her that his heart would not fail him. He then rejoined his comrades, and told them what had passed between the princess and himself, and warned them to be in readiness in case there might be need of their help.

At the appointed hour he met the beautiful Medea on the marble steps of the king's palace. She gave him a basket, in which were the dragon's teeth, just as they had been pulled out

of the monster's jaws by Cadmus long ago. Medea then led Jason down the palace steps, and through the silent streets of the city, and into the royal pasture-ground, where the two brazen-footed bulls were kept. It was a starry night, with a bright gleam along the eastern edge of the sky, where the moon was soon going to show herself. After entering the pasture, the princess paused and looked around.

"There they are," said she, "reposing themselves and chewing their fiery cuds in that farthest corner of the field. It will be excellent sport, I assure you, when they catch a glimpse of your figure. My father and all his court delight in nothing so much as to see a stranger trying to yoke them, in order to come at the Golden Fleece. It makes a holiday in Colchis whenever such a thing happens. For my part, I enjoy it immensely. You cannot imagine in what a mere twinkling of an eye their hot breath shrivels a young man into a black cinder."

"Are you sure, beautiful Medea," asked Jason, "quite sure, that the ointment in the gold box will prove a remedy against those terrible burns?"

"If you doubt, if you are in the least afraid," said the princess, looking him in the face by the dim starlight, "you had better never have been born than go a step nigher to the bulls."

But Jason had set his heart steadfastly on getting the Golden Fleece; and I doubt whether

he would have gone back without it, even had he been certain of finding himself turned into a red-hot cinder, or a handful of white ashes the instant he made a step farther. He therefore let go Medea's hand, and walked boldly forward in the direction whither she had pointed. At some distance before him he perceived four streams of fiery vapour, regularly appearing, and again vanishing, after dimly lighting up the surrounding darkness. These, you will understand, were caused by the breath of the brazen bulls, which was quietly stealing out of their four nostrils, as they lay chewing their cuds.

At the first two or three steps which Jason made, the four fiery streams appeared to gush out somewhat more plentifully; for the two brazen bulls had heard his foot tramp, and were lifting up their hot noses to snuff the air. He went a little farther, and by the way in which the red vapour now spouted forth, he judged that the creatures had got upon their feet. Now he could see glowing sparks, and bright jets of flame. At the next step, each of the bulls made the pasture echo with a terrible roar, while the burning breath, which they thus belched forth, lit up the whole field with a flash. One other stride did bold Jason make; and, suddenly, as a streak of lightning, on came these fiery animals, roaring like thunder, and sending out sheets of white flame, which so kindled up the scene that the young man could

distinguish every object more distinctly than by daylight. Most distinctly of all he saw the two horrible creatures galloping right down upon him, their brazen hoofs rattling and ringing over the ground, and their tails sticking up stiffly into the air, as has always been the fashion with angry bulls. Their breath scorched the grass before them. So intensely hot it was, indeed, that it caught a dry tree, under which Jason was now standing, and set it all in a light blaze. But as for Jason himself (thanks to Medea's enchanted ointment), the white flame curled around his body, without injuring him a jot more than if he had been made of asbestos.

Greatly encouraged at finding himself not yet turned into a cinder, the young man awaited the attack of the bulls. Just as the brazen brutes fancied themselves sure of tossing him into the air, he caught one of them by the horn, and the other by his screwed-up tail and held them in a grip like that of an iron vice, one with his right hand, the other with his left. Well, he must have been wonderfully strong in his arms, to be sure. But the secret of the matter was that the brazen bulls were enchanted creatures, and that Jason had broken the spell of their fiery fierceness by his bold way of handling them. And, ever since that time, it has been the favourite method of brave men, when danger assails them, to do what they call, "taking the bull by the horns"; and to

grip him by the tail is pretty much the same thing—that is, to throw aside fear, and overcome the peril by despising it.

It was now easy to yoke the bulls, and to harness them to the plough, which had lain rusting on the ground for a great many years gone by; so long was it before anybody could be found capable of ploughing that piece of land. Jason, I suppose, had been taught how to draw a furrow by the good old Chiron, who, perhaps, used to allow himself to be harnessed to the plough. At any rate, our hero succeeded perfectly well in breaking up the green sward; and, by the time that the moon was a quarter of her journey up the sky, the ploughed field lay before him, a large tract of black earth, ready to be sown with the dragon's teeth. So Jason scattered them broadcast, and harrowed them into the soil with a brush-harrow, and took his stand on the edge of the field, anxious to see what would happen next.

"Must we wait long for harvest time?" he inquired of Medea, who was now standing by his side.

"Whether sooner or later, it will be sure to come," answered the princess. "A crop of armed men never fails to spring up, when the dragon's teeth have been sown."

The moon was now high aloft in the heavens, and threw its bright beams over the ploughed field, where as yet there was nothing to be seen. Any farmer, on viewing it, would have said that

Jason must wait weeks before the green blades would peep from among the clods, and whole months before the yellow grain would be ripened for the sickle. But by-and-by, all over the field, there was something that glistened in the moonbeams, like sparkling drops of dew. These bright objects sprouted higher, and proved to be the steel heads of spears. Then there was a dazzling gleam from a vast number of polished brass helmets, beneath which, as they grew farther out of the soil, appeared the dark and bearded faces of warriors, struggling to free themselves from the imprisoning earth. The first look that they gave at the upper world was a glare of wrath and defiance. Next were seen their bright breastplates; in every right hand there was a sword or a spear, and on each left arm a shield; and when this strange crop of warriors had but half grown out of the earth, they struggled, and, as it were, tore themselves up by the roots. Wherever a dragon's tooth had fallen, there stood a man armed for battle.

For a while the warriors stood flourishing their weapons, clashing their swords against their shields, and boiling over with the red-hot thirst for battle. Then they began to shout, "Show us the enemy! Lead us to the charge! Death or victory! Come on, brave comrades! Conquer or die!" At last, the front rank caught sight of Jason, who, beholding the flash of so many weapons in the moonlight, had thought it best to draw his sword. In a moment

all the sons of the dragon's teeth appeared to take Jason for an enemy; and crying with one voice, "Guard the Golden Fleece!" they ran at him with uplifted swords and spears. Jason knew that it would be impossible to withstand them with his single arm, but determined, since there was nothing better to be done, to die as bravely as if he himself had sprung from a dragon's tooth.

Medea, however, bade him snatch up a stone from the ground.

"Throw it among them quickly!" cried she. "It is the only way to save yourself."

The armed men were now so nigh that Jason could see the fire flashing out of their enraged eyes, when he let fly the stone, and saw it strike the helmet of a tall warrior, who was rushing upon him with his blade aloft. The stone glanced from this man's helmet to the shield of his nearest comrade, and thence flew right into the angry face of another, hitting him smartly between the eyes. Each of the three who had been struck by the stone took it for granted that his next neighbour had given him a blow; and instead of running any farther towards Jason, they began a fight among themselves. The confusion spread through the host, so that it seemed scarcely a moment before they were all hacking, hewing, and stabbing at one another, lopping off arms, heads, and legs, and doing such great deeds that Jason could not help laughing to behold these mighty men

punishing each other for an offence which he himself had committed. In a very short space of time (almost as short, indeed, as it had taken them to grow up), all but one of the heroes of the dragon's teeth were stretched lifeless on the field. The last survivor, the bravest and strongest of the whole, had just force enough to wave his crimson sword over his head, and shout "Victory! Victory!" when he himself fell down, and lay quietly among his slain brethren.

And there was the end of the army that had sprouted from the dragon's teeth. That fierce and feverish fight was the only enjoyment which they had tasted on this beautiful earth.

STUDY NOTES.

PART V.

1. Who was Medea? Tell how she helped Jason to perform the two dreadful tasks set him by the King of Colchis.

2. Tell about Jason's encounter with the fiery bulls as he might have told it to his father.

3. How did Jason defeat the armed men who sprang up from the field sown with the dragon's teeth?

Word-Study:

Me-de'-a: an enchantress, daughter of Æetes, King of Colchis.

Cir'-ce (Sir'-se): an enchantress who lived on an island in the Mediterranean Sea. She had the power of changing into beasts those who drank of her magic cup.

as-sails': attacks.

de-spised': looked down upon; scorned.

sward (sound ar as in war): the grassy surface of land

Part VI.

Following Medea's advice, Jason went betimes in the morning to the palace of King Æetes. Entering the presence-chamber, he stood at the foot of the throne, and made a low bow.

"Your eyes look heavy, Prince Jason," observed the king; "you appear to have spent a sleepless night. I hope you have been considering the matter a little more wisely, and have concluded not to get yourself scorched to a cinder, in attempting to tame my brazen-lunged bulls."

"That is already accomplished, may it please your Majesty," replied Jason. "The bulls have been tamed and yoked; the field has been ploughed; the dragon's teeth have been sown broadcast, and harrowed into the soil; the crop of armed warriors has sprung up, and they have slain one another, to the last man. And now I seek your Majesty's permission to encounter the dragon, that I may take down the Golden Fleece from the tree, and depart, with my nine and forty comrades."

King Æetes scowled, and looked very angry and greatly disturbed; for he knew that, in accordance with his kingly promise, he ought now to permit Jason to win the fleece, if his courage and skill should enable him to do so. But since the young man had met with such good luck in the matter of the brazen bulls and

the dragon's teeth, the king feared that he would be equally successful in slaying the dragon. And therefore, though he would gladly have seen Jason snapped up at a mouthful, he was resolved not to run any further risk of losing his beloved fleece.

"You never would have succeeded in this business, young man," said he, "if my undutiful daughter Medea had not helped you with her enchantments. Had you acted fairly, you would have been, at this instant, a black cinder, or a handful of white ashes. I forbid you, on pain of death, to make any more attempts to get the Golden Fleece. To speak my mind plainly, you shall never set eyes on so much as one of its glistening locks."

Jason left the king's presence in great sorrow and anger. He could think of nothing better to be done than to summon together his forty-nine brave Argonauts, march at once to the grove of Mars, slay the dragon, take possession of the Golden Fleece, get on board the Argo, and spread all sail for Iolchos. But, as Jason was hastening down the palace steps, the Princess Medea called after him, and beckoned him to return.

"What says King Æetes, my royal and upright father?" inquired Medea, slightly smiling. "Will he give you the Golden Fleece, without any further risk or trouble?"

"No," answered Jason, "he is very angry with me for taming the brazen bulls and sowing the dragon's teeth. And he forbids me to make

any more attempts, and refuses to give up the Golden Fleece, whether I slay the dragon or no."

"Yes, Jason," said the princess, "and I can tell you more. Unless you set sail from Colchis before to-morrow's sunrise, the king means to burn your fifty-oared galley, and put yourself and your forty-nine brave comrades to the sword. But be of good courage. The Golden Fleece you shall have, if it lies within the power of my enchantments to get it for you. Wait for me here an hour before midnight."

At the appointed hour, you might again have seen Prince Jason and the Princess Medea, side by side, stealing through the streets of Colchis, on their way to the sacred grove, in the centre of which the Golden Fleece was suspended to a tree. Jason followed Medea's guidance into the grove of Mars, where the great oak trees, that had been growing for centuries, threw so thick a shade that the moonbeams struggled vainly to find their way through it. Only here and there a glimmer fell upon the leaf-strewn earth, or now and then a breeze stirred the boughs aside, and gave Jason a glimpse of the sky, lest, in the darkness, he might forget that there was one, overhead. At length, when they had gone farther and farther into the heart of the duskiness, Medea squeezed Jason's hand.

"Look yonder," she whispered. "Do you see it?"

Gleaming among the grand old oaks, there was a radiance, not like the moonbeams, but rather resembling the golden glory of the setting sun. It proceeded from an object which appeared to be suspended at about a man's height from the ground, a little farther within the wood.

"What is it?" asked Jason.

"Have you come so far to seek it," exclaimed Medea, "and do you not recognize the meed of all your toils and perils, when it glitters before your eyes? It is the Golden Fleece."

Jason went onward a few steps farther, and then stopped to gaze. Oh, how beautiful it looked shining with a wonderful light of its own, that glorious prize, which so many heroes had longed to behold, but had perished in the quest of it, either by the perils of their voyage, or by the fiery breath of the brazen-lunged bulls.

"How gloriously it shines!" cried Jason, in a rapture. "It has surely been dipped in the richest gold of sunset. Let me hasten onward, and take it to my bosom."

"Stay," said Medea, holding him back. "Have you forgotten what guards it?"

To say the truth, in the joy of beholding the object of his desires, the terrible dragon had quite slipped out of Jason's memory. Soon, however, something came to pass that reminded him what perils were still to be encountered. An antelope, that probably mistook the yellow brightness for sunrise, came bounding fleetly through the grove. He was rushing

straight towards the Golden Fleece, when suddenly there was a frightful hiss, and the immense head and half the scaly body of the dragon was thrust forth (for he was twisted round the trunk of the tree on which the fleece hung), and seizing the poor antelope, he swallowed him with one snap of his jaws.

After this feat, the dragon seemed sensible that some other living creature was within reach, on which he felt inclined to finish his meal. In various directions he kept poking his ugly snout among the trees, stretching out his neck a terrible long way, now here, now there, and now close to the spot where Jason and the princess were hiding behind an oak. Upon my word, as the head came swaying through the air, and reaching almost within arm's length of Prince Jason, it was a very hideous and uncomfortable sight. The gape of his enormous jaws was nearly as wide as the gateway of the king's palace.

"Well, Jason," whispered Medea (for she was ill-natured, as all enchantresses are, and wanted to make the bold youth tremble), "what do you think now of your chance of winning the Golden Fleece?"

Jason answered only by drawing his sword and making a step forward.

"Stay, foolish youth!" said Medea, grasping his arm. "Do not you see you are lost, without me as your good angel? In this gold box I have a magic potion, which is far more powerful than your sword."

The dragon had probably heard the voices, for swift as lightning his black head and forked tongue came hissing among the trees again, darting full forty feet at a stretch. As it approached, Medea tossed the contents of the gold box right down the monster's wide open throat. Immediately, with an awful hiss and a tremendous wriggle,—flinging his tail up to the tip-top of the tallest tree, and shattering all its branches as it crashed heavily down again,—the dragon fell at full length upon the ground, and lay quite motionless.

"It is only a sleeping potion," said the enchantress to Prince Jason. "Quick! snatch the prize, and let us begone. You have won the Golden Fleece."

Jason caught the fleece from the tree, and hurried through the grove, the deep shadows of which were illuminated as he passed by the golden glory of the precious object that he bore along. A little way before him, he beheld the old woman whom he had helped over the stream. She clapped her hands for joy, and beckoning him to make haste, disappeared among the duskiness of the trees. Espying the two winged sons of the North Wind (who were disporting themselves in the moonlight, a few hundred feet aloft), Jason bade them tell the rest of the Argonauts to embark as speedily as possible. But Lynceus, with his sharp eyes, had already caught a glimpse of him, bringing the Golden Fleece, although several stone walls, a hill, and the black shadows of the grove of Mars lay

between. By his advice, the heroes had seated themselves on the benches of the galley, with their oars held upright ready to let fall into the water.

As Jason drew near, he heard the Talking Image calling to him in its grave, sweet voice:—

"Make haste, Prince Jason! For your life, make haste!"

With one bound he leaped aboard. At sight of the glorious radiance of the Golden Fleece, the nine and forty heroes gave a mighty shout, and Orpheus, striking his harp, sang a song of triumph, while the galley flew over the water, homeward bound, as if careering along with wings!

Adapted.

STUDY NOTES.

PART VI.

1. What excuse did the King give for not carrying out his promise, after Jason had successfully performed the tasks set him by the King?

2. What did the King make up his mind to do in order to get rid of Jason and his companions? Why was the King unable to carry out his wicked plans?

3. Tell the story of the capture of the Golden Fleece as Medea might have told it to Orpheus when they were out of danger.

Word-Study:

sown broadcast: scattered the seeds with the hands.
un-du'-ti-ful: disobedient.
rap'-ture: extreme joy.
po'-tion (po'-shun): a dose or draught, usually of medicine.
ca-reer'-ing: moving rapidly.

THE BROOK.

Alfred Lord Tennyson.

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
  I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
  To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
  Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
  And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
  To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways
  In little sharps and trebles;
I bubble into eddying bays,
  I bubble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my bank I fret
  By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
  With willow-mead and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
  To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
  With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
  And here and there a grayling.

And here and there a foamy flake
  Upon me as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
  Above the golden gravel.

And draw them all along and flow
  To join the brimming river;
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
  I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
  That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance
  Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
  Among my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
  In brambly wildernesses;
I linger on my shingly bars;
  I loiter round my cresses.

And out again I curve and flow
  To join the brimming river;
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

STUDY NOTES.

1. What birds are found near the source of the brook?

2. What lines picture the brook on its journey to the low lands?

3. What verse gives you a good picture of the brook as it flows over its rough bed (down hilly country)? In what verses do you see the stream moving very gently onwards to join the brimming river? What is the cause of the slow movement?

4. What line makes you think that the brook is as old as the world?

5. What is it that impedes (obstructs, slackens) the dream?

6. What verse gives you a very beautiful picture of peace and happiness?

Word-Study:

sal'-ly: a darting or leaping forth.

bick'-er: wrangle; the quarrelsome tone of the brook as it rushes over the stones that try to obstruct (stop) its course.

thorps: small villages.

fal'-low: plowed land in which no crop is sown.

fore'-land: cape or promontory or headland.

hazel-covers: clumps of hazel trees.

shingle: a round water-worn stone.

bar: a bank of sand or rock obstructing the course of a stream.

THE UGLY DUCKLING.

Hans Andersen.

Part 1.

In a cosy nest near the bank of a stream that flowed past an old farm-house sat a duck waiting for her young brood to hatch. She was beginning to tire of her task, for the little ones were a long time coming out of their shells.

At length one shell cracked, and then several others, and out of each egg there scrambled a little half-naked creature crying "Peep, peep!" "Quack, quack!" answered the mother, by way of telling them that all was well. How they all stared on the great, wide, wonderful world into which they had so unexpectedly made their way!

"Do not imagine this is the whole world," their mother informed them; "it stretches far beyond the garden on to the other side of the meadow where the parson's cows are grazing, though I have never yet been there. But you are all here, I suppose," she added, with true motherly feelings; and then she stood up to have a look. "No, I declare!" she exclaimed sighing; "the largest of the eggs lies there still. I wonder how long this is to last. It is becoming really very wearisome!"

"Well, how are you getting on?" inquired an old duck, who paid her a visit.

"One egg is not yet hatched," said the duck; "the shell must be too thick. But just look at the rest. Are they not the prettiest little creatures that any mother could ever wish for!"

"Show me the egg that will not break," the old duck said, interrupting her. "It may be a turkey's egg. I was once played the same trick, and I had no end of trouble with the little ones, for they were afraid of the water. I coaxed, and scolded, and fumed, but all to no purpose: they would not venture in. Now let me examine the obstinate egg. Yes, it is, as I suspected, a turkey's egg. Take my advice, leave it alone, and teach the other children to swim."

"I think I will sit on it a little longer," replied the duck; "I have already had so much trouble that a day or two longer will be neither here nor there."

"Please yourself," said the old duck, and she went away, saying to herself, "She'll have trouble enough with that egg, I'll be bound."

At length the egg broke. "Peep, peep!" cried the latest arrival, tumbling out of the shell. He was so big and ugly that his mother could hardly bear to look at him. At last she exclaimed, "He is very peculiar, and not at all like the others. I wonder if he really is a turkey! I shall soon find out when I take the children down to the water. He must go in, even if I have to push him in; and then, if he cannot swim, he may drown, and serve him right, too, for being a cheat!"

The following day the weather was delightful; the mother duck, therefore, took her young family down to the water, and jumped in with a splash. "Quack, quack!" cried she, and then, one after another, they all jumped in. The water closed over their heads, but they came up again in an instant, paddling most gracefully, and the ugly duckling swam merrily with them.

"He is no turkey, that's plain enough to see!" said the mother duck; "just look how quickly he moves his legs, and how straight he holds himself! He is, indeed, my own son, and he is not so ugly after all, if you look at him properly. Now follow me quickly," she commanded, turning to her family, "and I shall take you to the poultry yard. But keep close to me, or you may be trodden on; and, above all, beware of the cat!"

They reached the yard where they found two worthy families quarrelling about an eel's head. The cat, however, put an end to their dispute by seizing the eel's head and running off with it.

"That's the way of the world," said the mother duck, and her mouth watered, for she would have liked the eel's head for herself. "Now move your legs," she said, "and bow prettily to that old duck over there; she is the highest bred of them all. Make haste, my children, but for goodness' sake don't turn your legs in; a well-bred duck always keeps its legs

far apart, just as I do. And when you bow, do not forget to bend your necks gracefully. Then you must boldly say, 'Quack, quack!' nothing more!"

The children did as they were told, but the ducks in the farmyard regarded them with looks of contempt. "Look!" said they, "here comes another brood, as if there were not enough of us already! And what a queer-looking creature one of them is! We don't want him here!" Then one of them flew at the ugly duckling, and pecked him in the neck.

"Let him alone!" cried the mother angrily; "he is not doing any harm, and I will not have him ill-treated."

"Yes, but look how clumsy and ugly he is," cried the spiteful duck; "we can't possibly have such a creature here!"

"He is certainly no beauty," added the mother, "but he has a very nice disposition, and swims quite as well as any of his brothers and sisters; in fact, I may say a little better; and I am of the opinion that, when he fills out, he will be handsome enough. Besides, as you know, a drake is not expected to be as handsome as a duck."

"The other little ones are charming," said the Spanish duck. She was very highly bred, and wore a piece of red cloth on her left leg to remind the world of that fact. "Now make yourselves at home, and if you should happen

to find an eel's head, you may bring it to me without hesitation. You understand me?"

And now they felt quite at home.

But the unfortunate youngster, who had come last out of the egg, was ill-treated and made fun of, not only by the ducks, but also by all the poultry. "He is much too big," they all said. A turkey, who had been born with spurs, and fancied himself an emperor, strutted up and down past the poor duckling, becoming more and more indignant that such an ugly creature should be allowed to remain in the farmyard.

Day by day the lot of the ugly duckling became worse and worse. Even his brothers and sisters were unkind to him, and would often say, "Ah, you ugly creature, I wish the cat would get you!" and his mother would often wish that he had never been born. The ducks bit him, the chickens pecked him, and the girl who fed the poultry kicked him.

At last, driven by fear and despair, he flew away in the direction of a swamp to which instinct guided him. This swamp was surrounded by a thick forest, and was the home of flocks of wild ducks. Here, sad and tired to death, the ugly duckling remained the whole night long.

Early the next morning, aroused by the first glimmer of the sun, the wild ducks rose from their watery beds to take a turn in the warm summer air, when, what was their surprise to

find a stranger amongst them! "What a funny creature!" they exclaimed. "Where can he have come from?" they inquired, one of the other. The stranger bowed to them with the greatest politeness.

"You are extremely ugly!" the wild ducks said; but that will make no difference to us, as long as you do not marry into our family."

The poor outcast had no thoughts of marriage. All he wanted was to stay among the rushes and find a little food. Here he lay for two whole days, when two wild geese or rather goslings, arrived on the scene.

"Well met, comrade!" one of them said; you are so ugly that we like you. Come with us, for close by there is another swamp where .... "Bang, bang!" The two goslings fell down dead, close to the ugly duckling. "Bang, bang!" and a flock of geese arose from the rushes. There was more firing, for sportsmen lay all around the swamp, some of them sitting on branches of trees that overhung the masses of rushes. The poor duckling was almost frightened to death. He hid himself in the reeds, and lay quite still, when suddenly a big dog came running by him, and plunged into the water without touching him. "Thank Goodness!" exclaimed the poor outcast; "I am so ugly that not even a dog will touch me!"

Not till late in the afternoon did the firing cease, but even then the poor creature, whose

life had been saved as if by a miracle, did not venture to move. He waited several hours before he drew his head from under his wing; then, finding the coast clear, he hastened away, with all possible speed, from the horrible scene.

Late that night the duckling reached a miserable cottage that remained standing, only because it did not know on which side to fall. The door had broken loose from the lower hinge, leaving a little opening into the room. The storm was raging with double fury; the poor tired creature could go no further; he slipped through the opening, and found shelter for the night.

STUDY NOTES.

PART I.

1. What did the visitor say to the mother duck about the egg that was so long in hatching? How did the mother duck prove that the visitor was wrong?

2. Tell the story of the mother duck's visit to the poultry yard with her young family.

3. How was the ugly duckling treated by his brothers and sisters? What did his mother say that showed she did not really love him?

4. Tell the story of the duckling's escape to a swamp, and say what happened to him there.

5. Where did he find a night's lodging after leaving the swamp?

Word-Study:

ob'-sti-nate: stubborn; not giving in readily.

con-tempt': scorn.

dis'-po-si'-tion (dis'-po-zish'-un): character.

hes'-i-ta'-tion: doubt.

in-dig'-nant: feeling very angry because of some insult or mean action.

Part II.

A woman, a tom-cat, and a hen lived in this cottage. The tom-cat was wonderfully clever: he was a perfect master at "purring;" he could turn somersaults; he could even throw out sparks when his fur was stroked the wrong way. The old woman called him "My Little Son." The hen had very thin, short legs; she was, therefore, called "clucky-short-legs." She laid the very best eggs, and her mistress loved her as if she were her own child.

In the morning the strange visitor was discovered, and the cat began to purr, and the hen to cluck. "What is this noise about?" said the old woman, looking round the room; but, as her eyesight was not very good, she thought that the visitor must be some fat duck that had strayed away from home. "Oh, how lucky I am!" exclaimed she. "I hope it is not a drake, for then I shall have some duck's eggs. I must wait and see." So the duckling was allowed to remain on trial for three weeks, but there were no eggs.

Now the cat was the master of the house, and the hen was the mistress, and they always used to say, "We and the world," for they believed themselves to be half the world, and the better half, too. The duckling thought that others might have a different opinion, but the hen would not listen to him.

"Can you lay eggs?" she asked him.

"No."

"Then, please to hold your tongue!"

And the cat said, "Can you arch your back, or purr, or throw out sparks?"

"No."

"Then you have no right to offer your opinion when sensible people are talking!"

So the duckling sat in the corner feeling very low spirited; but when he thought of the fresh air outside, and the warm sunshine, he felt such a longing to go swimming on the clear water that he could not help telling the hen

"What a mad idea!" said the hen. "You have nothing else to do, otherwise you would not have such silly fancies. If you could lay eggs, or purr, they would soon pass away."

"But it is so pleasant to swim," the poor creature answered; "so delightful to dive to the bottom, and look up at the moon through the clear water!"

"Delightful, indeed!" said the hen; "why you must be crazy!" Ask the cat—he is the cleverest animal I know—ask him how he would like to go swimming about in the water, and diving to the bottom. Ask our mistress, the old woman—I will not speak of my own opinions—ask her if she has a fancy for diving and swimming."

"You don't understand me," the poor duckling sighed.

"We don't understand you! Who can understand you, pray! Do you consider yourself cleverer than the cat, or the old woman, not to mention myself? Pray, don't be so conceited, child, and be thankful that you have such a good home here! Are you not in a warm room, and among people from whom you may learn much? But you are merely a prattler, and your company is by no means pleasing to us. Believe me, I speak only for your own good. I may tell you things you do not like to hear, but that is a proof of my sincere friendship. I strongly advise you, therefore, to lay eggs, and to learn to purr as quickly as possible."

"I think I must go out into the world again," said the young duck.

"Yes, do," the hen answered; "we shall manage to live without you."

So the duckling began his wanderings again, making first for a marsh where he could swim and dive to his heart's content. But it was a very lonely life that he led there, because no water bird would associate with such an ugly creature.

It was now late in autumn, with frequent storms of snow and hail. The brown and yellow leaves of the forest were caught up by the wind and whirled in the cold air. The sky was of a leaden hue, and no voice was heard, save the "caw, caw!" of the crows, as they sat in

the hedges, almost frozen with the cold. All this was very sad for the poor little duckling.

One evening, just as the sun was setting amid bright clouds, a great flock of beautiful birds flew over the marsh on which the ugly duckling was swimming. He had never seen anything like them before. He did not know that they were swans, and that they were on their way to warmer regions across the seas. As he watched them mounting higher and higher in the air, the ugly duckling felt quite a strange sensation. He whirled himself in the water, like a wheel, stretched out his neck towards them, and uttered a cry so strange that it frightened himself. Could he ever forget those beautiful birds! When at length they were out of sight, he dived under the water, and rose again, almost beside himself with excitement. He was not envious of those beautiful birds, but he wished to be as lovely as they were. Poor ugly creature, he craved for friendly companionship!

The winter grew colder and colder; he was obliged to swim constantly on the water to keep it from freezing. He became quite exhausted at last, and lay still and helpless, frozen fast in the ice.

Next morning, early, a peasant passing by saw what had happened. He rescued the unfortunate duckling, and carried it home to his wife. The warmth revived the poor little crea-

ture; but when the children wanted to play with him, the duckling thought that they meant to ill-treat him because of his ugliness. He, therefore, started up in terror, fluttered into the milk pan, and splashed the milk about the room. Then the woman clapped her hands, which frightened him still more. He flew first into some freshly-made butter, then into the flour box, and out again. What a condition he was in! The woman screamed and struck at him with the tongs; the children tumbled over one another in their efforts to catch him; but he managed to slip out of the open door into some bushes, where he lay quite exhausted in the snow.

It would be very sad were I to relate all the misfortunes that befell the poor little duckling during that hard winter; but, when it was over, he found himself lying one morning among the rushes that fringed a wide moor. The warm sun, the song of the lark, and the fresh green foliage of the trees announced the advent of spring. Then the young bird spread out his wings, and they carried him onwards with great ease until he found himself over a beautiful orchard, where he alighted. The fruit trees were in full blossom, and the fragrant elder trees bent their branches down to the stream which encircled a beautiful lawn. From a thicket near by came three beautiful white swans, rustling their wings and swimming

gracefully over the smooth waters. The duckling remembered the lovely birds, and a feeling of deep sadness once more came over him.

"I will fly to these royal birds," he exclaimed, "and they will kill me because I am so ugly, and dare to approach them. But what matter! better be killed by them than pecked by the ducks, beaten by the hens, kicked out of the way by the girl who feeds the poultry, or starved to death by the hard winter."

Then he flew to the water, and swam to the beautiful swans. The moment they espied the stranger, they rushed to meet him with outstretched wings.

"Kill me," said the poor bird; and he bent down his head and awaited death.

But what did he see in the clear stream below? His own image; no longer an ugly duckling, but a graceful and beautiful swan.

Into the garden, presently, came some little children, and they threw bread and cake into the water.

"See," cried the youngest, "there is a new one," and the rest of the children were delighted. They ran to their father and mother dancing and clapping their hands, and shouting joyously, "There is another swan come, a new one!"

Then they threw more bread and cake into the water, and said, "The new one is the most

beautiful of all; he is so young and so pretty!" And the old swans bowed their heads before him.

Then he felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wing, for he did not know what to do; he was so happy, and yet not at all proud. He has been cruelly ill-treated and looked down upon for his ugliness, and now he heard it said that he was the most beautiful of all the birds. Even the elder tree bent down its boughs into the water before him, and the sun shone warm and bright. Then he rustled his feathers, curved his slender neck, and cried joyfully from the depths of his heart, "I never dreamed of such happiness when I was an ugly duckling."

STUDY NOTES.

PART II.

1. Tell the story of the ugly duckling's life in the cottage. Why did he leave the cottage? Where did he go?

2. Fill in the blanks in the following: The birds that the ugly duckling saw flying over the marsh were . . . . They were flying to . . . . . regions across the . . . . . .

3. Tell the story of the ugly duckling's narrow escape from death on the marsh.

4. Why did he not remain in his new home?

5. The ugly duckling made an important discovery about himself: what was it?

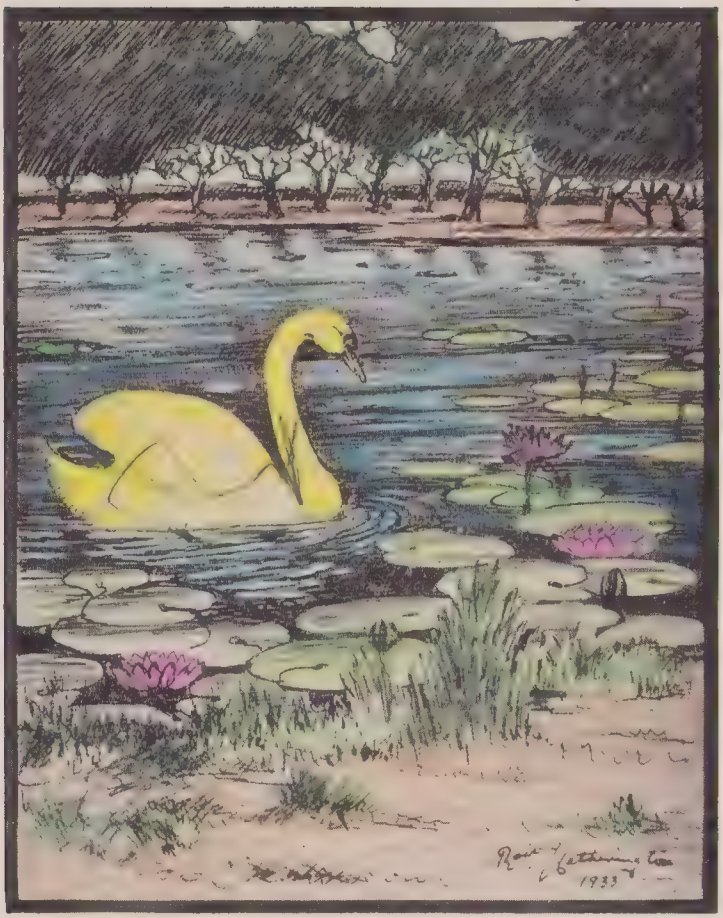
6. Find passages telling you that he was very happy in his new home.

Word-Study:

con-ceit'-ed (**ceit** rhymes with **feet**): vain; proud.

as-so'-ci-ate (as-so'-she-ate): to join company with some one as a friend, companion or partner.

re-vive': to recover life or strength.



I never dreamed of such happiness when I was an ugly duckling.

AN APPLE ORCHARD IN THE SPRING.

William Martin.

Have you seen an apple orchard in the spring?
In the spring?
An English apple orchard in the spring?
When the spreading trees are hoary
With their wealth of promised glory,
And the mavis sings its story,
In the spring.

Have you plucked the apple blossoms in the spring?
In the spring?
And caught their subtle odours in the spring?
Pink buds pouting at the light,
Crumpled petals baby white—
Just to touch them a delight—
In the spring.

Have you walked beneath the blossoms in the spring?
In the spring?
Beneath the apple blossoms in the spring?
When the pink cascades are falling,
And the silver brooklets brawling,
And the cuckoo bird soft calling
In the spring.

If you have not, then you know not, in the spring,
In the spring,
Half the colour, beauty, wonder of the spring,
No sweet sight can I remember
Half so precious, half so tender
As the apple blossoms render,
In the spring.

STUDY NOTES.

1. Hoary means white with age. What is it that makes the apple tree look hoary? What is the promised glory? What adds to the beauty of the apple orchard in the spring?

2. In the second verse you are delighted with something else as well as the beauty of the apple blossoms: what is it? What is the colour of the buds? of the petals (flower leaves)?

3. What is it that makes a walk under the apple-trees so delightful in the spring?

4. Complete the following: You can never know half the colour, beauty or wonder of the spring if you have not . . . . You will find the answer to this question in the third verse.

Word-Study:

ma'-vis: a song bird, found in European countries.
sub'-tle (sut'-tle): delicate; difficult to distinguish
cas'-cades: waterfalls.

ROBINSON CRUSOE'S ADVENTURES IN THE FORESTS OF FRANCE.

Part I.

Robinson Crusoe was shipwrecked on an uninhabited island, where he remained for twenty-eight years. This island was occasionally visited by natives from other islands. On one of these occasions, when they had landed to kill and eat some of their prisoners, one of the latter escaped. Robinson Crusoe shot one of this prisoner's pursuers and rescued the prisoner, to whom he afterwards gave the name Friday. The following story tells of Robinson Crusoe's journey homewards through France, after he had been rescued from his island prison.

It was about two hours before night when, our guide being some distance in front of us and not just in sight, out rushed three huge wolves, and after them a bear. Two of the wolves made at the guide and, had he been far ahead of us, he must have been devoured before we could have helped him. One of the wolves fastened upon his horse, and the other attacked him so fiercely that he had not time, or presence of mind enough, to draw his pistol. He called out lustily for help, whereupon I bade my man Friday ride up and see what was the matter. As soon as Friday came in sight of the man he shouted out at the top of his voice: "O, master! O, master!" but, like a bold fellow,

rode straight up to the poor man and shot the wolf, whereupon the other wolf that had attacked the horse made for the forest.

It is easy to suppose that, at the noise of Friday's pistol, we all mended our pace, and rode up as fast as we could to see what had happened. As soon as we came clear of the trees we saw that the danger was over, for the wolf lay dead between the two horsemen.

Friday's next encounter was with the bear.

The bear is a heavy, clumsy creature, and does not gallop as does the wolf, who is swift and light. He has two particular qualities which guide his actions whenever he meets you: first, if you do not meddle with him he will not meddle with you. But then you must take care to be very civil to him, and give him the road, for he is a very nice gentleman: he will not go out of his way for a prince. Nay, if you are really afraid, your best plan is to look the other way, and keep going on; for sometimes, if you stop and stand still, and look steadfastly at him, he takes it for an affront. Should you throw or toss anything at him and hit him ever so lightly, he thinks himself abused, and will set aside all other business to seek revenge. This is his first quality. The next is that, if he is once affronted, he will never leave you night or day till he overtakes you and has his revenge.

My man Friday had saved the guide's life, and, when we rode up, he was helping him off

from his horse, for the poor man was both hurt and frightened, when, on a sudden, we espied a bear, and a monstrous one it was—the biggest by far that I had ever seen. We were all a little surprised when we saw him; but, when Friday saw him, it was easy to see joy and courage on the fellow's countenance. "O. o, o!" says Friday, pointing to him; "O master! You give me leave, me shakee hands with him: me makee you good laugh."

I was surprised to see the fellow so well pleased. "You fool," says I, "He will eat you up"—"Eatee me up! eatee me up!" says Friday, twice over again; "me eatee him up; me makee you good laugh; you all stay here, me show you good laugh." So down he sits and gets off his boots in a moment, puts on a pair of shoes, gives my other servant his horse, and with his gun away he flies, swift as the wind.

The bear was walking softly on, not offering to meddle with anybody, till Friday, coming pretty near, called to him, as if the bear could understand him: "Hark ye, hark ye, me speakee with you." We followed at a distance, for the country was pretty open, though it had many trees in it scattered here and there. When Friday came up with the bear he picked up a great stone, threw it at him, and hit him just on the head, but did him no more harm than if he had thrown it against a wall. It answered Friday's purpose, however, for the

rogue was so fearless that he did it purely to make the bear follow him and show us some laugh, as he called it.

As soon as the bear felt the blow he turned about, and came after Friday, taking long strides and shuffling on at a strange rate, such as would put a horse to a middling gallop. Away ran Friday towards us, as if for help, so we all resolved to fire at once upon the bear and deliver my man. I was very angry with him for bringing the bear back on us when he was going about his business another way; and I was especially angry that he had turned the bear upon us, and then run away. "You dog!" said I, "is this the way you make us laugh? Come away, and take your horse that we may shoot the creature." He heard me, and cried out: "No shoot, no shoot; stand still, and you get plenty laugh."

And, as the nimble creature ran two feet to the bear's one, he turned on a sudden, and seeing a great oak-tree fit for his purpose, he beckoned us to follow; then doubling his pace, he nimbly climbed the tree, laying his gun down upon the ground about five or six yards away The bear soon came up to the tree, and we followed at a distance. The first thing he did was to stop at the gun and sniff it; then up he scrambled into the tree, climbing like a cat, though so monstrous heavy. I was amazed at the folly, as I thought it, of my man, and could

not for my life see anything to laugh at; but seeing the bear get up the tree, we all rode near to him.

When we came to the tree there was Friday on the small end of a large branch, and the bear about half way to him. As soon as the bear got out to that part of the tree where the limb of the tree was weaker, "Ha!" says Friday to us, "now you see me teachee the bear dance." So saying, he began to shake the bough, at which the bear began to totter; then he stood still and began to look behind him to see how he could get back. Then, indeed, we did laugh heartily. But Friday had not done with him by a great deal; for, seeing him stand still, he called out to him again, as if the bear could understand English: "What, you come no farther? pray you come farther." So Friday left off jumping and shaking the tree; and the bear, just as if he had understood what had been said, did come a little farther. Then Friday fell a jumping again, and the bear once more stopped still.

We thought now was a good time to knock the bear on the head, and we called to Friday to stand still, and we would shoot it; but he cried out earnestly: "O pray! O pray! no shoot; me shoot by and by." However, to shorten the story, Friday danced so much, and the bear stood so ticklish, that we had laughing enough, but still could not imagine what the fellow would do. First we thought he intended shaking the bear off the tree, but we found that

the bear was too cunning for that; for he would not go out far enough to be thrown down, but clung fast with his great broad claws and feet, so that we could not imagine how the joke would end. But Friday put us out of doubt quickly, for seeing that the bear could not be persuaded to come any farther: "Well, well," said he, "you no come to me, me go to you;" and upon this he went to the smaller end of the bough, where it would bend with his weight, and gently let himself down by it, sliding down the bough till he came near enough to jump down on his feet; he then made for his gun.

"Well," said I to him, "what will you do now, Friday? Why don't you shoot him?"—"No shoot," replied Friday, "not yet; me stay, give you one more laugh." And indeed, so he did; for when the bear saw his enemy gone, he came back from the bough, mighty cautiously, looking behind him every step, and coming backward till he got into the body of the tree, then grasping the trunk with his claws and moving one foot at a time, very leisurely. But, before he could set his hind foot on the ground. Friday stepped up to him, clapped the muzzle of his gun into his ear, and shot him dead.

STUDY NOTES.

PART I.

1. Tell how Friday saved the life of the guide.

2. In what way does the wolf differ from the bear? What are the two peculiar qualities of the bear's character? Which of the two makes him a very dangerous enemy?

3. What makes you think that Friday had previously (before this time) met many bears? Tell the story of his encounter with the bear.

Word-Study:

lus'-ti-ly: vigorously; strongly.

nice (gentleman): particular; hard to please.

af-front': insult.

mon'-strous (mon'-strus): of extraordinary (unusual) size. Note pronunciation: ex-tror'-di-na-ry.

lei'-sure-ly (**leisure** rhymes with **measure**): taking plenty of time; the opposite to hurriedly.

Part II.

We were not gone half over the plain, when we began to hear the wolves howl in a frightful manner in the wood on our left, and presently after we saw about a hundred coming on directly towards us, all in a body, and most of them in a line, as regularly as an army on the march. I scarce knew in what manner to receive them, but found to draw ourselves in a close line was the only way. I then ordered that only every other man should fire, and that the others who had not fired should stand ready to give the wolves a second volley immediately, if they continued to advance upon us. Each of my men was armed with a gun and a pair of pistols; we were thus able to discharge six volleys at our enemies, if necessary, half of us at a time. However, at the first volley the enemy made a full stop, being terrified as well with the noise as with the fire. Four of the wolves

dropped dead, shot in the head; several others were wounded, and went bleeding off, as we could see by the snow.

Seeing that the enemy were not retreating, I ordered all my men to halloo as loudly as they could; for I remembered being told that the fiercest creatures were terrified by the voice of a man. I found the notion not altogether mistaken; for upon our shouting they began to retire, and turn about. I then ordered a second volley to be fired at them, which put them to the gallop, and away they went to the woods. This gave us time to reload our guns, after which we resumed our journey, but we had scarcely done so when we heard a terrible noise in the same wood, on our left—the same way we were to go.

The night was coming on, and the light began to be dusky, which made our journey more perilous. On a sudden we perceived two or three troops of wolves, one on our left, one behind us, and one on our front, so that we seemed to be surrounded with them. However, as they did not attack us, we kept on our way, as fast as we could make our horses go, which, the way being very rough, was only a good hard trot. In this manner we came in view of the entrance of the wood, through which we were to pass, at the farther side of the plain; but we were greatly surprised when, coming nearer the lane or pass, we saw a number of wolves standing just at the entrance. On a sudden, at an-

other opening of a wood, we heard the noise of a gun; and, as we turned to look that way, out rushed a horse with a saddle and bridle, flying like the wind, with sixteen or seventeen wolves after him full speed.

But here we had a most horrible sight; for, riding up to the entrance where the horse came out, we found the carcass of another horse and the remains of two men, devoured by the ravenous creatures. One of the men was no doubt the same as had fired the gun; for there lay the gun beside him, fired off. This filled us with horror, and we knew not what road to take; but we were not long left in doubt, for the savage creatures soon gathered round us in hopes of their prey; and I verily believe that there were three hundred of them.

It happened very much to our advantage that at the entrance into the wood there lay some large trees, which had been cut down the summer before, and I suppose lay there waiting to be carried away. I drew my little band in among those trees, and placing ourselves in a line behind one long tree, I advised them all to alight, and keeping that tree before us for a breastwork, to stand in a triangle, enclosing our horses in the centre. We did so, and it was well we did; for never was a more furious charge than the creatures made upon us in this place. They came on with a growling kind of noise, and mounted the piece of timber which, as I said, was our breastwork, as if they were

only rushing upon their prey. Their fury, it seems, was caused by their seeing our horses behind us. I ordered our men to fire as before, every other man, and they took their aim so sure that they killed several of the wolves at the first volley; but we had to keep on firing, for they came on like devils, those behind pushing on those in front.

When we had fired a second volley, we thought they stopped a little, and seemed about to go off; but it was only for a moment, for others came forward again. Having fired off our guns, we gave them two volleys of our pistols; and I believe that in these four firings we killed seventeen or eighteen of them, and lamed twice that number, yet they came on again. I did not want to spend our shot too hastily, so I called one of my servants, and giving him a horn of powder, I bade him lay a large train all along the piece of timber. He did so, and had but just time to get away when the wolves came up to it. Some of them got on top of it, and it was then that I snapped an uncharged pistol close to the powder and set it on fire. The wolves on the timber were scorched, and six or seven of them fell, or rather jumped in among us, with the force and fright of the fire. We killed these in an instant, and the rest were so frightened that they drew back a little; upon which I ordered our last pistols to be fired off in one volley, followed by a mighty shout from all my men.

This was the end of the fight: the wolves turned tail, and we immediately fell with our swords on to the wounded, to the number of twenty, that were found struggling on the ground.

In about an hour more we came to the town where we were to lodge.

Adapted.

STUDY NOTES.

PART II.

1. What makes you think that there must have been several travellers in Robinson Crusoe's party? What was Robinson Crusoe's plan to meet the first attack? Was it a good plan? Give your reasons. What was the result of the first attack by the wolves?

2. Complete this unfinished sentence: The fiercest creatures are sometimes terrified . . . . . .

3. Why was the second attack of the wolves far more dangerous than the first? Tell what plans Robinson Crusoe formed to meet the second attack. Draw a plan showing how he arranged his party for the fight.

4. What example is given showing how fierce the wolves were?

5. What makes you think that Robinson Crusoe would have made a good general in the army—was it because he was a good horseman, or a big strong man, or because he was clever in forming plans to beat the enemy?

Word-Study:

vol'-leys: When soldiers fire all together they are said to fire a volley.

re-treat'-ing: going back. The opposite to **retreating** is **advancing.**

car'-cass (kar-kas): the dead body of an animal.

rav'-en-ous: furious with hunger.

ver'-i-ly: truly.

THE CUNNING SPIDER.

Richard Jefferies—Wood Magic.

Once upon a time there was a very cunning spider—a very cunning spider indeed. The old toad by the rhubarb told Bevis there had not been such a cunning spider for many summers; he knew almost as much about flies as the old toad, and caught such a great number that the toad began to think there would be none left for him. Now the toad was extremely fond of flies, and he watched the spider with envy, and grew more angry about it every day.

As he sat blinking and winking by the rhubarb all day long, the toad never left off thinking, thinking, thinking about the spider. Now one day, after several weeks of thinking, he crawled out of his house into the sunshine, which he did not like at all, and went across the grass to the iron railings, where the spider had then got his web. The spider saw him coming, and being very proud of his cleverness, began to taunt and tease him.

"Your back is all over warts, and you are an old toad," he said. "You are so old that I heard the swallows say that their great-great-great-grandmothers, when they built in the chimney, did not know when you were born. And you have got foolish, and past doing anything, and so stupid that you hardly know when it is going to rain. Why, the sun is shining

bright, you stupid old toad, and there isn't a chance of a single drop falling. You look very ugly down there in the grass. Now, don't you wish that you were me and could catch more flies than you could eat? Why, I can catch wasps and bees, and tie them up so tight with my threads that they cannot sting or even move their wings or wriggle their bodies. I am the cleverest and most cunning spider that ever lived."

"Indeed, you are," replied the toad. "I have been thinking so all the summer; and so much do I admire you that I have come all this way, across the hot sun, to tell you something."

"Tell *me* something!" said the spider, much offended. "I know everything!"

"Oh, yes, honoured sir," said the toad; "you have such wonderful eyes, and such a sharp mind, that you indeed know everything about the sun and the moon, and the earth, and flies. But, as you have studied all these great and important things, you could hardly see the very little trifles like a poor old toad."

"Oh, yes, I can. I know everything—everything!"

"But, sir," went on the toad so humbly, "this is such a little—such a very little—thing, and a spider like you, in such a high position of life, could not mind my telling you such a mere nothing."

"Well, I don't mind," said the spider; "you may go on and tell me, if you like."

"The fact is," said the toad, "while I have been sitting in my hole, I have noticed that such a lot of flies that come into this garden presently go into the summer-house there; and, when they are in the summer-house they always go to that little round window, which is sometimes quite black with them, for it is the nature of flies to buzz over glass."

"I do not know so much about that," said the spider; "for I have never lived in houses, being an independent insect; but it is possible you may be right. At any rate, it is not of much consequence. You had better go up into the window, old toad." [Now this was a sneer on the part of the spider.]

"But I can't climb up into the window," said the toad; "all I can do is to crawl about, but you can run up a wall quickly. How I do wish I was a spider, like you! Oh, dear!" And then the toad turned round, after bowing to the clever spider, and went back to his hole.

Now the spider was somewhat angry with himself because he had not noticed this about the flies going to the window in the summer-house. At first he said to himself that it was not true; but he could not help looking that way now and then, and every time he looked there was the window crowded with flies. They had all the garden to buzz about in, and all the

fields; but, instead of wandering under the trees and over the flowers, they preferred to go into the summer-house and crawl over the glass of the little window, though it was very dirty from so many feet. For a long time the spider was too proud to go there too; but one day such a splendid blue-bottle fly got in the window and made such a buzzing that he could not resist it any longer.

So he left his web by the railings and climbed up the blue-painted wall, and spun such a web in the window as had never before been seen. It was the largest and finest and the most beautifully-arranged web that had ever been made, and it caught such a number of flies that the spider grew fatter every day. In a week's time he was so big that he could no longer hide in the crack he had chosen; he was quite a giant; and the toad came across the grass one night and looked at him, but the spider was now so bloated that he could not recognize the toad.

But one morning a robin came to the iron railings and perched on the top, and put his head a little on one side to show his black eye the better. Then he flew inside the summer-house, alighted in the window and gobbled up the spider in an instant. The old toad shut his eye and opened it again, and went on talking, for that was just what he knew would happen. Ever so many times in his long life he had seen spiders go up there, but no sooner had they got fat than a robin or a wren came in and ate

them. Some of the clever spider's web was still there when Bevis looked out of the window all dusty and draggled with the skins and wings of some gnats and a dead leaf entangled in it.

Adapted.

STUDY NOTES.

1. In what way was the spider very cunning? Who proved to be the more cunning, the spider or the toad?

2. Why was the toad angry with the spider?

3. Which of the following words best describes the spider as he was talking to the toad: lazy, stupid, conceited, angry?

4. What made the toad think of the trick to get rid of the spider? You will find the answer to this question in the last paragraph of the lesson.

5. Had the spider not listened to the toad's . . . . . he would not have lost his life. Which of the following words best fills in the blank: advice, story, flattery?

6. Tell the story as the toad might have told it to his wife.

Word-Study:

drag'-gled: having dirty water marks.

gnats (nats): little blood-sucking insects; mosquitoes

THE GLADNESS OF NATURE.

William C. Bryant.

Is this a time to be cloudy and sad,
  When our mother Nature laughs around;
When even the deep blue heavens look glad,
  And gladness breathes from the blossoming
    ground?

The clouds are at play in the azure space
  And their shadows at play on the bright
    green vale,
And here they stretch to the frolic chase
  And there they roll on the easy gale.

There's a dance of leaves in that aspen bower,
  There's a twitter of winds in that beechen
    tree,
There's a smile on the fruit and a smile on the
    flower,
  And a laugh from the brook that runs to the
    sea.

And look at the broad-faced sun, how he smiles
  On the dewy earth that smiles in his ray,
On the leaping waters and gay young isles;
  Ay, look, and he'll smile thy gloom away.

STUDY NOTES.

1. Find the lines telling you of the gladness of the heavens. What game are the clouds playing? What two words in the second verse mean the clear blue sky?

2. Find the lines telling you of the gladness of Mother Earth. What word in verse three makes you think that the

winds are singing? The fruit and the flowers must also be happy because they are . . . . . The answer to this question is given in the third verse. How does the brook show you that it is happy?

3. What is it that smiles back at the sun? Complete the following:—The laughing sun will surely drive away . . . . .

Word-Study:

az'-ure (azh'-ur or a'-zhur): clear blue, like the colour of the unclouded sky.

frol'-ic: gay; merry; playful.

asp'-en bow'-er: the shade of the asp trees. The asp belongs to the poplar family of trees.

ANTS AND THEIR SLAVES.

Michelet.

Peter Huber, the son of the noted observer of the ways and habits of bees, was walking one day in a field near Geneva, Switzerland, when he saw on the ground an army of reddish-coloured ants on the march. He decided to follow them and to find out, if possible, what they were about.

On the sides of the column, as if to keep it in order, a few of the insects sped to and fro. After marching for about a quarter of an hour, the army halted before an ant-hill, the home of a colony of small, black ants. These swarmed out to meet the red ones, and, to Huber's surprise, a combat, short but fierce, took place at the foot of the hill.

A small number of the blacks fought bravely to the last, but the rest soon fled, panic-stricken, through the gates farthest from the battle-field, carrying away some of their young. They seemed to know it was the young ants that the invaders were seeking. The red warriors quickly forced their way into the tiny city and returned, loaded with children of the blacks.

Carrying away their captives, the robbers left the town and started toward their home, and Huber followed them. Great was his astonishment when, at the threshold of the red ants' dwelling, he saw numbers of black ants come forward to receive the young captives and to welcome them—children of their own race, doomed to be slaves in a strange land.

Here, then, was a tiny city, in which strong red ants lived in peace with small black ones. But what tasks did these little black creatures fulfil? Huber soon discovered that, in fact, they did all the work. They alone were able to build the houses in which both races lived; they alone brought up the young red ants and the captives of their own tribe; they alone gathered the supplies of food, and waited upon and fed their big masters, who were glad to have their little waiters feed them so attentively.

The masters themselves had no occupation except that of war. When not raiding some village of the blacks, the red soldiers did nothing but wander lazily about.

Huber wanted to learn what would happen if the red ants found themselves without servants. Would the big creatures know how to supply their own needs? He put a few of the red insects in a glass case, having some honey in a corner. They did not go near it. They did not know enough to feed themselves. Some of them died of starvation, with food before them. Then he put into the case one black ant. It went straight to the honey, and with it fed its big, starving, silly masters. Here was a wonder, truly!

The little blacks perform many useful tasks, as the careful observer can easily see. For example, these tiny wise creatures will not give permission to any of the great red ones to go out alone. Nor are they at liberty to go out even in a body, if their small helpers fear a storm, or if the day is far advanced. If the soldiers return from their raids without any captives, they are forbidden by the blacks to enter the city, and are ordered to attack some other village.

Huber did not know what to make of these strange creatures. He therefore asked a famous observer, named Jurine, whether his observations were correct. Jurine, and indeed others, found that Huber's reports were true.

"Yet, after all," says Huber, "I still doubted. But on a later day I again saw in a park, near Paris, the same workings of ant life and wisdom. A well-known observer was with me then, and his conclusions were the same as mine.

"It was half-past four in the afternoon of a very warm day. From a pile of stones there came forth a column of about five hundred reddish ants. They marched rapidly toward a field of turf, order in their ranks being kept by their sergeants. These watched the flanks, and would not permit any to straggle.

"Suddenly the army disappeared. There was no sign of an ant-hill in the turf, but, after awhile, we noticed a little hole. Through this the ants had vanished. We supposed it was an entrance to their home. In a minute they showed us that we were wrong. They came out in great numbers, nearly every one of them carrying a small black captive.

"From the short time they had taken, it was plain that they knew the place and the weakness of its citizens. Perhaps it was not the reds' first attack on this city of the little blacks. These swarmed out in great numbers; and, truly, I pitied them. They did not attempt to fight. They seemed terror-stricken, and made no attempt to oppose the warrior ants, except by clinging to them. One of the robbers was stopped thus, but a comrade that was free relieved him of his burden, and thereupon the black ant let go his grasp.

"It was in fact a painful sight. The soldiers succeeded in carrying off nearly five hundred children. About three feet from the entrance to the ant-hill the unhappy black parents ceased to follow the red robbers, and resigned

themselves to the loss of their young. The whole raid did not occupy more than ten minutes.

"The parties were, as we have seen, very unequal in strength, and the attack was clearly an outrage—an outrage no doubt often repeated. The big red ants, knowing their power, played the part of tyrants; and, whenever they wanted more slaves, robbed the small weak blacks of their greatest treasures—their children."

STUDY NOTES.

1. How did Peter Huber find out so much about ants? Write out his account of the army he followed. Draw a plan of an army of red ants on the march. What did Huber discover about the habits of these ants? What was it that he still wanted to find out about them?

2. Tell about the experiment Huber carried out with a few red ants. What did he learn from this experiment?

3. What paragraph shows you that the black ants were not altogether slaves in the city of the red ants?

4. Do you know of any insect pests that attack fruit, or vegetable, or farm crops in this State? If so, tell what you know of any of them.

5. Complete this unfinished sentence: In this State much has been found out about the habits of destructive insects by people who spend much time in . . . . .

Word-Study:

pan'-ic-strick'-en: stricken with a great and sudden fear

in-vad'-ers: those who enter a town or country to rob or conquer it.

raid: a sudden and rapid attack.

ser'-geants (sar'-jents): officers in the army who instruct the soldiers in drill.

col'-umn (kol'-um): a body of troops (soldiers) formed in ranks, one behind the other.

flanks: the ends of the ranks.

THE INCHCAPE ROCK.

R. Southey.

No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
The ship was still as she could be,
Her sails from heaven received no motion,
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock
The waves flowed over the Inchcape Rock;
So little they rose, so little they fell,
They did not move the Inchcape Bell.

The Abbot of Aberbrothok
Had placed that bell on the Inchcape Rock.
On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung.

When the Rock was hid by the surge's swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell;
And then they knew the perilous Rock,
And blessed the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The sun in heaven was shining gay,
All things were joyful on that day:
The sea-birds screamed as they wheeled around,
And there was joyaunce in their sound.

The buoy of the Inchcape Bell was seen
A darker speck on the ocean green:
Sir Ralph the Rover walked his deck,
And he fixed his eye on the darker speck!

The buoy of the Inchape Bell was seen.

He felt the cheering power of spring,
It made him whistle, it made him sing;
His heart was mirthful to excess,
But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the Inchcape float;
Quoth he, "My men, put out the boat,
And row me to the Inchcape Rock,
And I'll plague the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

The boat is lowered, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape Rock they go;
Sir Ralph bent over from the boat,
And he cut the Bell from the Inchcape float.

Down sunk the Bell with a gurgling sound,
The bubbles rose and burst around;
Quoth Sir Ralph, "The next who comes to the
Rock
Won't bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

Sir Ralph the Rover sailed away,
He scoured the seas for many a day;
And now grown rich with plundered store.
He steers his course for Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky,
They cannot see the sun on high;
The wind hath blown a gale all day,
At evening it hath died away.

On the deck the Rover takes his stand,
So dark it is they see no land.
Quoth Sir Ralph, "It will be lighter soon,
For there is the dawn of the rising moon."

"Can'st hear," said one, the breakers roar?
For methinks we should be near the shore.
Now where we are I cannot tell.
But I wish I could hear the Inchcape Bell."

They hear no sound, the swell is strong;
Though the wind hath fallen they drift along,
Till the vessel strikes with a quivering shock,—
"O Christ! it is the Inchcape Rock!"

Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair;
He cursed himself in his despair;
The waves rush in on every side,
The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But even in his dying fear
One dreadful sound could the Rover hear,
A sound as if with the Inchcape Bell
The Devil below was ringing his knell.

STUDY NOTES.

1. Tell how the Abbot of Aberbrothok had saved many ships from being wrecked.
2. What makes you think that the Inchcape Rock was only just above sea level (not high out of the water)?
3. What two words show you that Sir Ralph was a pirate? Why did he not hear the bell as he came near the Inchcape Rock? What did he do when he saw the bell?
4. Tell how Sir Ralph's boat came to be shipwrecked and himself and crew drowned. Are you glad or sorry to hear of Sir Ralph's death? Why? What was it that in his last moments reminded him of his wickedness?

Word-Study:

keel: the bottom of the ship.
Ab'-bot: the head of an abbey or monastery. **Ab'-er-bro-thok':** name of the abbey.
joy'-aunce: joyfulness.
mirth-ful: playful.
knell (nell): the tolling (ringing) of a bell at a funeral.

GOLDEN CANNAS.

From the French.

Behind the Judge's Farm where I was born, there was a little stream that ran along the roadside till it reached our old draw well, which it fed. Though quite shallow, the water was clear and sparkling, and when I was a child I used to delight in dabbling along its banks. Ah, the old draw-well pond! Here, as I played, I learned my first lessons of nature. There were shoals of fish here, stickleback and carp, which I tried to catch by hanging from a long reed a small canvas bag that had once served as a nail bag. There were dragon flies, too—green, blue, and black; and as they came daintily to rest on the reeds, I would capture them oh, so gently, in my little fingers. But sometimes they were too quick for me, and lightly, silently, with a quivering of gauzy wings, they would fly away. Then there were the little frogs, their green and gold speckled backs just peeping through the moss; though, as soon as they caught sight of me, they would dive swiftly back into the water. Newts wriggled about in the mud, whilst overhead the great horn-winged beetles which we call "eel-killers" hovered in search of prey.

There was also a wealth of aquatic plants. Here the broad leaves and the lovely white blossoms of the waterlilies floated superbly on the surface of the water. Here the pale narcissus was mirrored in the stream and here the tiny-leafed duckweed mingled with the blue

forget-me-not, which in Provence they call the "eyes of the Child Jesus." But what delighted me most of all in this happy garden of Nature, were the cannas—large plants growing in clumps at the water's edge, their long leaves and beautiful yellow blooms standing like great golden halberds out of the water.

It was a fine summer's day shortly after the harvesting season, and all the farm hands were hard at work threshing. The horses and mules were treading hard, and some twenty men, with their shirt sleeves rolled up, removed the husks, or tossed the straw with their long wooden forks. The threshing season is a happy one. All is sunshine and laughter, and the women, with their bare feet, dance gaily on the newly threshed grain. At one end of the room was the winnowing cradle swinging from a large iron tripod. The women emptied the corn from their baskets into this great sieve, whilst the "master," my father, a tall splendid figure, shook the sieve to and fro in the wind, working the refuse to the top. Sometimes the wind dropped, or ceased altogether. Then my father, holding the motionless sieve in his hands, and gazing out into the blue, would say as seriously as if he were talking to a friendly god: "Come, blow dear wind; come, blow." And I have seen the "mistral," in obedience to my father's wish, draw breath and begin to blow once more, carrying off the refuse, while the blessed yellow grain fell in a golden shower on to the steadily rising mound below.

In the evenings, when the grain had been heaped up with shovels, and the men, all powdered with dust, went to wash at the well, or to draw water for the animals, my father would measure the heap, saying as he did so: "May God make thee fruitful."

I was barely four years old on this fine afternoon, and, having rolled in the new hay as children love to do, I set off alone for the draw-well pond. The beautiful yellow cannas were just bursting into bloom and I longed to pluck some of the lovely golden buds. I reached the stream, stole softly to the water's edge, and put out my hand to grasp the flowers. They were just out of reach. I leaned a little further towards them, and in an instant was up to my neck in water. I cried out. My mother came running to the rescue. She pulled me out of the water, gave me a slap or two and sent me off home ahead of her, dripping like a duck.

"Let me catch you at the pond again, little scamp," she scolded.

"But I wanted to pick the cannas," I pleaded.

"Oh indeed! You wanted to pick cannas! Don't you know, you young scamp, that there is a snake hidden in that long grass, a big snake that eats up birds and little children?"

She undressed me, took off my little shoes, socks and shirt, and while my clothes were drying, she dressed me in my sabots and my Sunday suit.

"Now see that you keep yourself clean!" she warned me. Off I went once more to the threshing shed, where I somersaulted gaily in the new hay. Suddenly I caught sight of a big white butterfly fluttering through the stubble. Off I went in pursuit of it, my yellow curls flying in the wind; and all at once I found myself at the pond again. Oh, my beautiful yellow flowers! There they were, lifting their heads proudly out of the water, and looking so tempting that I could not resist them. I went cautiously down to the bank and placed my feet carefully together on the very edge of the water; then I stretched out my hand, leaning as far forward as I could—and splash! there I was in the water again.

How terrified I was! Little bubbles gurgled all round me, and I thought I could see the big snake among the grass. Then I heard a loud cry from the threshing sheds: "Mistress! Come quickly! The little one is in the water again!" My mother came running out. She lifted me in her arms, and pulled me out of the black muddy water, then gave me a good sound smack.

"So you went back to your cannas after all, naughty child! Do you want to drown yourself? A new suit ruined, you young rascal! You'll be the death of me!"

Tearful, bedraggled, and hanging my penitent head, I returned to the farm house. Once more I was undressed, and this time I was decked out in my holiday costume. Oh that fine

I longed to pluck the lovely buds.

suit! I can see it yet with its black velvet bands and its gold dots on a blue ground.

"What shall I do now?" I said to my mother when she had arrayed me in all my splendour.

"Go and mind the chickens," she said. "You can keep them away from the corn. Mind you stay in the shade."

I ran joyfully after the chickens, which were pecking at the stray ears of corn among the stubble. While I was minding them, I caught sight of a crested pullet, and what do you think it was chasing? Why, a grasshopper with brightly coloured red and blue wings. They went dancing over the fields with me after them, for I wanted to see the grasshopper again. Soon we found ourselves at the draw-well pond. There were the lovely golden flowers mirrored in the stream. How I longed for them! I quite forgot my previous duckings.

"This time I'll get them," I said to myself. I went down to the bank and twined round my hand a reed which I found growing at the water's edge. Then, bending cautiously over the water, I tried to reach with my other hand, as far as the golden cannas. But alas! the reed betrayed me. It broke, and I tumbled head first into the pond. I struggled, and cried out in terror. All the farm hands came running to the spot.

"That little imp is in the water again!" they exclaimed. "This time, you young rascal, your mother will give you the whipping you deserve."

But she did not. I saw her coming down the path, and there were tears in her eyes.

"Oh Heaven!" she cried. "How can I whip him? He is different from other boys. Why, he does nothing but run after flowers. He loses all his toys scrambling through the cornfields in search of wildflowers. And now if he hasn't thrown himself three times within an hour into the pond! Ah well! I suppose I must be thankful he is not drowned."

We went miserably back to the farmhouse, where my mother, saint that she was, undressed me and rubbed me down with her apron. Then she gave me a dose of medicine to guard against a possible chill, and put me to bed, where I very soon sobbed myself to sleep.

Can you guess what I dreamed of? Why, my canna flowers of course! In a lovely stream of water which wound about our farmhouse, clear and blue as a fairy fountain, I saw the most beautiful clumps of tall cannas; and out of their great green leaves there rose a host of golden blossoms. Little dragon-flies with blue silk wings came and settled on the flowers, and I swam about naked in the laughing streamlet. I gathered handfuls and armfuls of the lovely yellow blooms. And the more I gathered, the faster they sprang up.

All at once I heard a voice calling me: "Frederick!" I woke up, and there beside me, I saw a great bunch of gleaming yellow flowers.

The Master himself, my esteemed father, had actually gone to pick those flowers I so longed for, and the Mistress, my sweet mother, had placed them on my bed.

STUDY NOTES.

1. The little boy discovered a new and very wonderful world round about the . . . . . Finish this sentence. What wonderful things did he see there? Which did he love the most? How many times did he visit the pond?

2. Tell the story of the little boy's visits to the pond as his mother might have told it to a neighbour.

3. What makes you think that the farm on which the little boy lived was a very large one?

4. The winnowing cradle had numerous holes on the bottom. That is why it is called a sieve. The grains of wheat passed through the sieve, leaving the husks which, being very light, were carried away by the wind. What name was given to this wind?

5. What did the little boy dream about after having been put to bed? What made him think that his dream was true when he awoke? What makes you think that his mother and father loved him very much? What subject do you think the boy would like best of all when he went to school—Arithmetic? Spelling? Nature Study?

Word-Study:

a-quat'-ic (a-kwot'-ick): growing or living in water. Name some aquatic plants and animals.

su-perb'-ly: grandly; richly; elegantly.

hal'-berds (hol'-birds): A halberd was a long-handled weapon, the head of which had a long point and several long, sharp edges, curved or straight.

nar-cis'-sus (nar-sis'-sus): a kind of flower. It grows from a bulb and has a cup-shaped crown surrounded by six flower leaves or petals.

hov'-er-ed (hov'-erd): hung fluttering in the air.

mis'-tral: a cold north-west wind that blows in parts of France near the Mediterranean Sea.

sa-bot' (sa-bow'; **bow** rhymes with **go**): a wooden shoe worn by peasants in some European countries.

som'-er-sault (sum'-er-salt): a leap in which a person turns his heels over his head and alights upon his feet.

pen'-i-tent: feeling sorry for wrongs you have done.

sieve rhymes with **give**. See notes above.

AN AUSTRALIAN CRADLE SONG.

John Harrison Wagner.

Over the hills and far away,
  Deep in a shady dell,
The crystal fountains leap and play;
A dream of delight is the live-long day,
Over the hills and far away,
  In the land where the fairies dwell.

Never a trouble or worldly care
  Into that dell may come;
The sweetest flowers breathe perfume rare,
The wattle-tree loosens her golden hair,
And softly floats, on the languid air,
  The wild bee's drowsy hum.

The tall fern spreads a graceful wing
  To shut the light away;
And ever the fountains laugh and sing,
The moss and the maidenhair climb and cling,
And the bell-bird's note doth sweetly ring
  To the drip of the silver spray.

Here, where the moon and stars are bright,
  The fairies dance and sing;
'Down thro' the air, each tiny sprite
'Floats in a robe of filmy white,
'On the smooth green-sward, the live-long
    night,
  To trip in a mystic ring.

To the music made by the waving tree
  Stirred by the fresh night air,
While the moon looks down and laughs with
    glee,
And each little star winks merrily;
And it's O, 'twere good for an hour to be
  With the fairies dancing there!

So hush thee, hush, my baby boy!
  Let slumber weave her spell;
And you shall roam, till break of day,
Where the laughing fountains leap and play,
Over the hills and far away,
  In the land where the fairies dwell.

STUDY NOTES.

1. In what verse do you find out that this is a lullaby song? You know that the mother is singing to her baby boy about a very beautiful dell that he will see in dreamland: what lines tell you so?

2. A dell is an opening in the hills—a kind of cleft. What very beautiful things are to be seen in this dell? What beautiful sounds are to be heard there? Can you find anything else that makes this dell a delightful rest-place? What sound would make you feel sleepy?

3. What lines tell you the fairies visit this charming spot? What makes music for their dancing? Whom can you see looking on and enjoying this pretty scene (picture)?

Word-Study:

crys'-tal (kris'-tal): very clear and sparkling.
lan'-guid (lan'-gwid): heavy. The air is heavy with the scent of flowers.
green-sward: turf; grass.
mys-tic (mis'-tic): very wonderful and hard to understand.
film'-y (fil'-my): having a very thin covering.

OLIVER TWIST.

Charles Dickens.

Part I.

Oliver Twist was born in the work-house, and for many years knew no other home. Here he suffered hunger, poverty, and neglect; for there was no one to care for him, and indeed it mattered little whether he lived or died. No one knew who Oliver's parents were. His mother had been picked up in the streets, half dead with hunger and fatigue. But, before anyone could learn who she was, or whence she came, she died, leaving her young baby to be brought up at the expense of the parish.

At the age of nine, Oliver was sent to work with several other boys of his own age, to learn a trade. Now, although they worked hard from morning till night, they were given nothing to eat except a little thin gruel. They were fed in a large stone hall with a copper at one end. Here the master, dressed in a big white apron, ladled out the gruel at meal times. The boys were allowed one plateful, and no more, except on special occasions, when they were allowed a little bread as well. The bowls never wanted washing, for the boys polished them with their spoons till they shone again. Then they would look eagerly at the copper, as if they were ready to devour the very bricks.

At last the boys decided that something must be done, or they would all die of starvation. So they drew lots to see who should walk up to the master after supper and ask for more. The lot fell to Oliver Twist. That night the gruel disappeared even more rapidly than usual, and all eyes were fixed anxiously on Oliver. Terrified though he was, the poor child was desperate with hunger; so taking up his basin and spoon, he rose timidly and went up to the master and said:

"Please, sir, I want some more." The master turned pale, and gazed at Oliver in amazement.

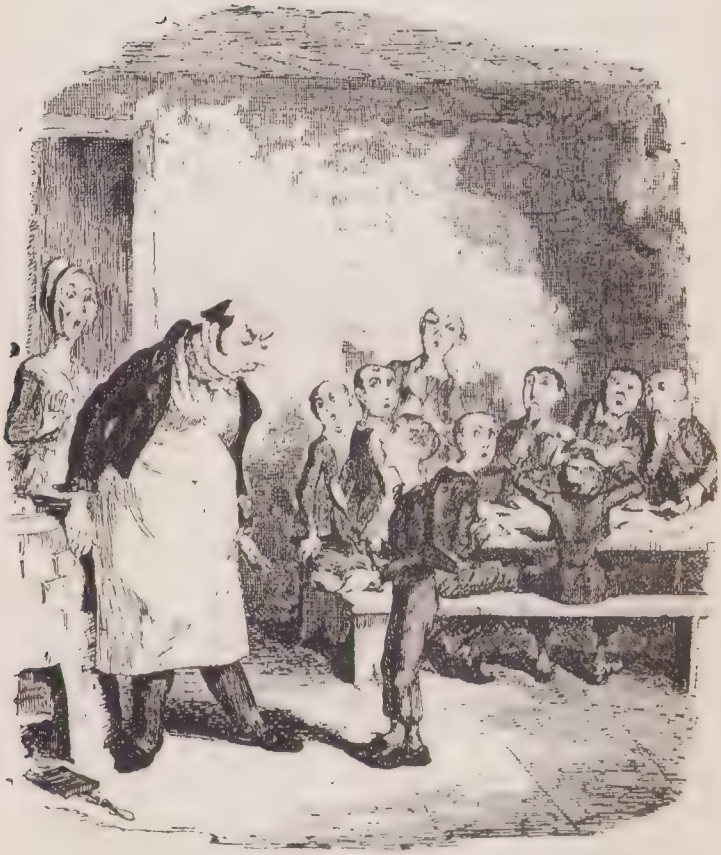
"What did you say?" he asked at length, in a faint voice.

"Please, sir, I want some more," Oliver replied. The master aimed a blow at Oliver's head with the ladle, and shouted aloud for Mr. Bumble, the beadle.

"I beg your pardon, sir!" exclaimed the master, as Mr. Bumble came blustering into the room, "but Oliver Twist has asked for more!" Mr. Bumble declared that this was a most serious matter, and hastened to inform the board at once.

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen! but Oliver Twist has asked for more." Everyone was horrified, and one old gentleman exclaimed:

"That boy will be hanged one of these days, I know it!"



Oliver asking for more.

After much discussion, the board decided not to keep this dangerous young rebel any longer. So they posted a notice on the gate offering a reward of five pounds to anyone who would relieve them of Oliver Twist.

As a result of this notice, Oliver was apprenticed to an undertaker named Mr. Sowerberry. His life here was even more miserable than before. He had little taste for funerals, and he hated the dark coffins among which he was compelled to sleep at night. He could have tolerated this, however, had it not been for the everlasting bullying of the undertaker's assistant and the harsh treatment of his mistress. He therefore determined to run away. So, taking with him a few clothes, a crust of dry bread, and a penny—which was all the wealth he possessed in the world—he set out.

As soon as he was safely out of the town he sat down on a milestone to rest, and to consider where he had better go to try and earn a living. Glancing at the milestone beside him, Oliver saw the inscription—"London, 70 miles." His mind was made up in a moment. London! Why, nobody would ever find him there! He had often heard the old men in the work-house say that no lad of spirit need ever want in London. It was the very place for a poor homeless boy like himself.

Oliver soon found that walking to London was far more difficult than he had imagined. He walked twenty miles the first day, but he

was so weary and footsore next day that he could not cover anything like that distance. He was soon reduced to begging for his food. A turnpike-man gave him some bread and cheese, and a kind old lady gave him what little money she could afford. But for their help Oliver would most certainly have fallen dead upon the highway.

On the morning of the seventh day, Oliver limped slowly into a little town not far from London. Worn out with hunger and fatigue, he could go no further, and sank down upon the doorstep of a house. He had not even the heart to beg. Presently he observed a lad of about his own age watching him earnestly from the other side of the road. He was a snub-nosed, flat-browed, common-faced boy, as dirty as you would wish to see. He was wearing a man's coat which reached nearly to his heels. The cuffs were turned back so that he might thrust his hands into his pockets. Oliver thought he was the queerest looking boy he had ever seen.

Seeing that Oliver returned his gaze, the strange young gentleman crossed the road and said:

"Hullo, my friend; what's the trouble?"

"I am very hungry and tired," Oliver replied, with tears in his eyes. "I have been walking for seven days."

"Walking for seven days? Where are you going?"

"I am going to London."

"Have you any money?"

"No."

The strange boy whistled, and put his arms into his pockets as far as the big coat-sleeves would let them go.

"I suppose you want some place to sleep in to-night?" he asked.

"I do, indeed," answered Oliver. "I have not slept under a roof since I left the country."

"Well, don't let that worry you," said the young gentleman. "I have to be in London to-night, and I know a respectable old gentleman who will give you lodgings for nothing."

Oliver gratefully accepted this offer, and soon he and the strange lad were chatting away like old friends. He discovered that his companion's name was Jack Dawkins, but that he was better known as the Artful Dodger. Jack Dawkins did not care about entering London before nightfall, so they went first to a small shop, where the Dodger bought some ham and a fourpenny loaf from which they made a hearty meal.

It was about eleven o'clock when Jack Dawkins led Oliver down an evil looking lane to the door of his lodging-house. Groping his way with one hand, and with the other firmly grasped in his companion's, Oliver managed to ascend the dark and broken stair-way. Then the door of a back room was thrown open, and Oliver was drawn in.

The walls and the ceiling of the room were perfectly black with age and dirt. On the table before the fire there was a candle, stuck in a ginger-beer bottle. Some sausages were cooking in a frying pan on the fire, and standing over them, a toasting-fork in his hand, was an evil-looking Jew, with a great, matted, red beard. He was wearing a greasy flannel gown. The Dodger whispered a few words to the Jew and to the other young men, who were seated round the table. Then he turned round and grinned at Oliver.

"Here he is, Fagin," he said. "This is my friend, Oliver Twist."

The Jew smiled and made a low bow to Oliver, saying he hoped they would soon be better acquainted. Upon this, the young gentlemen crowded round Oliver, shook him by the hand, felt his bundle, and emptied his pockets to save him the trouble of doing so himself. But they were interrupted in these small kindnesses by the Jew, who smote them over the head with his toasting-fork, and sent them about their business.

"We are all very glad to see you, Oliver," he said. "Dodger, take off the sausages, and draw up a chair for Oliver."

After the boy had finished his supper, the Jew gave him a glass of gin and water, and told him to drink it off quickly, because another gentleman was waiting for the tumbler. Oliver

did as he was told, and immediately afterwards he felt himself gently lifted on to an old sack Then he fell into a deep sleep.

When Oliver opened his eyes next morning he was amazed to see the Jew gloating over the contents of a small box he had taken from a trapdoor in the floor. The Jew kept muttering away to himself, and grinning hideously as he took out rings, brooches, bracelets and other costly things. Oliver had never before beheld such wealth. Just as Fagin was about to replace the jewels, his eyes fell upon Oliver's face. and he knew he had been observed. He closed the lid of the box with a loud crash, seized a knife from the table, and started up furiously.

"What are you watching me for?" he cried. "What have you seen? Speak out, boy!"

"I was not able to sleep any longer, sir," Oliver replied meekly. "I am sorry if I have disturbed you."

"Were you awake an hour ago?" asked the Jew, scowling fiercely.

"Indeed, sir, I was not," replied Oliver earnestly. Upon this the Jew threw the knife down. and made believe he was only in sport.

"Of course you were not, my dear boy. I was only trying to frighten you. You are a brave boy, Oliver."

But although the Jew chuckled and rubbed his hands together at this joke, he kept glancing uneasily at the box. At last he said:

"Did you see any of these pretty things, my dear?"

"Yes, sir," said Oliver.

At this the Jew turned pale.

"They're all mine, Oliver," he said, "all I have to live upon in my old age. Folks call me a miser, my dear."

At this moment the Dodger came in with a friend by the name of Charley Bates, and they had their breakfast.

PART I. STUDY NOTES.

1. Tell all you can about Oliver's life in the work-house. How did he come to leave the work-house? Where did he then go?
2. What made Oliver think about going to London? How far was London away? How long did his journey take him?
3. How did Oliver come to spend a night at Fagin's house?
4. What leads you to think that Fagin was not a good man?

Word-Study:

par'-ish: a division of a district, something like our roads board, or a town ruled by a mayor and council.
beadle: a servant of the parish.
blus'-ter-ing: noisy and violent, as the wind. A noisy person who "shows off" is called a blustering fellow.
the board: the members of the council who ruled the parish; they supervised the work-house, that is, they made laws for its government.
reb'-el: one who defies authority or government.
tol'-er-a-ted: put up with.
in-scrip'tion: something written or engraved; especially something engraved on a solid substance. You see an inscription on a tombstone.
turn'-pike: a gate across a road to stop vehicles until a toll (sum of money—generally very small) is paid for keeping the road in repair.

Part II.

Oliver remained with the Jew for many days, during which time he was not permitted to venture out of the room.

At last he obtained permission to go out one day with Charley and his friend, the Dodger. The boys sauntered lazily along the streets, and amused themselves by stealing apples from the stalls as they passed. Oliver was about to protest against this, when his attention was drawn to the curious behaviour of his two companions.

Just across the road there was a bookstall, where a well-dressed old gentleman had stopped to look at some books. He had taken up one and was reading away as hard as if he had been in an arm-chair in his own study. The two boys crept stealthily up behind the old gentleman, and Oliver was horrified to see the Dodger thrust his hand into the old man's pocket and draw out a handkerchief. Then they both made off at full speed around the corner. Oliver was so bewildered that he turned and fled as fast as he could.

Now, the very moment when Oliver began to run, the old gentleman put his hand to his pocket, missed his handkerchief, and turned round sharply. Seeing the boy scudding off at such a high rate, he naturally took him to be the thief. So shouting "Stop, thief!" with all his might, he made off after him, book in hand.

At the cry "Stop, thief," the tradesmen left their shops, the butcher threw down his tray, the baker his basket, the milkman his pail, the errand-boy his parcels, the school-boy his marbles; and away they all went, tearing, yelling, screaming, knocking down passengers as they turned the corners, and rousing up the dogs till the whole street echoed and re-echoed with the cry "Stop, thief!" Even the Dodger and Master Charley joined in the pursuit for a while, and cried "Stop, thief!" like good citizens. At last Oliver was seized by a burly policeman.

"I didn't do it sir, indeed I didn't!" he cried earnestly. But the officer only laughed, and seizing Oliver by the collar of his jacket, dragged him off to the nearest police-court.

Now, there was something so touching about Oliver's face, that the old gentleman, whose name was Mr. Brownlow, began to wonder if he might not be innocent after all. He felt so sorry for the boy that he told the magistrate he did not wish to go on with the case. But the magistrate was a great ill-tempered bully. He took no notice of Mr. Brownlow's protests, and would have sent Oliver to gaol, had it not been for the keeper of the bookstall. He had seen everything, and had rushed into court just as they were about to carry Oliver to the cell; for the poor little fellow had fainted. When the magistrate heard all the facts of the case, he was forced to admit that Oliver was innocent, and ordered him to be discharged.

Mr. Brownlow saw at once that Oliver was really very ill.

"Poor boy, poor boy!" he said, "pray call a cab, someone." A coach was called, and Oliver having been carefully laid on one seat, the old gentleman got in and seated himself on the other. He took Oliver to his own home, where he had a bed prepared for him, and tended him kindly till he recovered from his illness.

Soon Oliver was able to sit up in an easy chair, well propped up in pillows. He felt more happy and cheerful than he had ever been in his life. Mr. Brownlow was delighted to see him getting well and strong, and determined never to send him away again, unless Oliver gave him good cause. He would not allow Oliver to talk of his life with Fagin just yet; he thought that there would be time enough for that when he had quite recovered.

Now Mr. Brownlow had a friend who disliked Oliver, and he strongly advised Mr. Brownlow not to trust him. The kind old gentleman himself had no doubts, but he was anxious to give his friend some proof of Oliver's honesty. So he called the boy and asked him if he would go an errand. Oliver was delighted to be of use, and promised to run all the way.

"I want you to go to the bookstall," said Mr. Brownlow. "You are to pay the man the money I owe him, and bring me back the change. Here is a five-pound note."

Oliver buttoned up the bank-note in the pocket of his new suit, placed the books carefully under his arm and set off, promising not to be longer than ten minutes.

After he had gone, Mr. Brownlow took his watch from his pocket and placed it on the table.

"Let me see," said he, "he'll be back in twenty minutes at the latest."

Twenty minutes passed, but Oliver did not return. Mr. Brownlow watched the clock anxiously, till it grew so dark that he could no longer see the hands. As there was still no sign of the boy, the old gentleman was forced to believe his friend was right, and that Oliver had stolen the books and the money and had returned to his old friends, the thieves.

STUDY NOTES.

PART II.

1. What was the name of the old gentleman whose pockets were picked at the bookstall? How did Oliver come to be blamed? Who saved him from being put in gaol?

2. What makes you think that Mr. Brownlow was a very kind old gentleman? What did he do to find out if Oliver was thoroughly honest? What did he think of Oliver's disappearance?

Word-Study:

saun'-tered (saun'-terd; sound **au** as **ah**): strolled; loitered; lounged.

to pro-test': to declare solemnly.

stealth'-i-ly: in a secret or sly manner.

bur'-ly (rhymes with **curly**): big and rough.

Part III.

Now, when Charley and the Dodger returned home without Oliver Twist, the Jew, Fagin, flew into a terrible rage and vowed he must be found at once, for the boy knew enough to have the police on their tracks at any moment. To help him in this task, the Jew chose a young woman named Nancy, and a ruffian by the name of Bill Sikes.

Nancy was first sent to the police office to find news of her "dear, sweet, innocent, little brother, Oliver." She was very surprised to find that he was not in gaol at all, but was living with the kind old gentleman. Fagin was delighted to hear this, and resolved that the boy should be kidnapped immediately.

"He has told nothing so far," said the Jew; "we may yet stop his mouth."

And so it happened that, as Oliver Twist was on his way to the bookstall, thinking how fortunate he was to have found such a good home, he was startled by a loud voice crying:

"Oh, my dear brother!"

He looked up to see what was the matter, and at once found a pair of arms thrown tightly about his neck.

"Don't!" cried Oliver struggling, "Let me go. Who are you, and what do you want?"

"Oh, my gracious," said the young woman. "I've found him! Oh, Oliver, Oliver, you

naughty boy to make me suffer such distress on your account! Come home, come home dear! Oh, thank Heaven I've found him!"

The young woman then burst into such a fit of crying that very soon a crowd had gathered round them.

"What's the matter ma'am?" inquired one of the women.

"Oh, ma'am," replied the young woman, "he ran away about a month ago from his parents, who are hard-working, respectable people, and joined a set of thieves and bad characters. It almost broke his mother's heart."

"The young wretch!" said one of the women.

"Indeed, I am not," said Oliver, greatly alarmed. "I don't know her. I haven't any sister, or father or mother either. I'm an orphan."

"Just listen to him! How he braves it out!" cried the young woman.

"Why it's Nancy!" exclaimed Oliver, who now saw her face for the first time.

"You see, he does know me!" cried Nancy to the by-standers. "Oh, make him come home, good people, or he'll kill his dear father and mother and break my heart!"

At that moment Bill Sikes appeared with his fierce white dog.

"Here, what's all this?" he cried, forcing his way through the crowd. "Young Oliver! Come home to your poor mother, you young dog! Come home at once!"

"I don't belong to them. I don't know them. Help! help!" cried Oliver, struggling in the man's powerful grasp.

"Help?" repeated the man. "Yes, I'll help you, you young rascal! What books are these? You've been stealing, have you?"

With these words the man tore the volumes from his grasp, and struck him on the head.

"That's right," cried a voice from a garret window: "that's the way to bring him to his senses."

Too weak and terrified to resist any longer, Oliver suffered himself to be dragged along through the narrow streets.

At last they stopped before the door of a shop. A board nailed to the door notified the public that the premises were to let. Judging by the dirt and cobwebs the place must have been empty for years. Sikes glanced around cautiously, then rang the bell. There was a noise as if a window were being gently raised for someone to peer through, and soon afterwards the door was softly opened. Mr. Sikes seized the terrified boy by the collar, and all three were quickly inside.

The passage was perfectly dark. They waited while the person who had let them in chained and barred the door.

"Let's have a candle," said Sikes, "or we shall go treading on the dog. Look out for your legs if you do!"

"Stand still for a moment, and I'll get you one," replied a voice that sounded familiar to Oliver's ears.

Presently Oliver's old friend, the Dodger, appeared with a candle in his hand. They crossed an empty kitchen and entered a low, earthy room at the back. Here they were received with shouts of laughter.

"Oh, my wig, my wig!" cried Master Charley Bates. "Look at him, Fagin! Just look at him!"

When Charley had recovered from his fit of mirth, he took a candle, and holding it so close to Oliver's new jacket that he almost set it on fire, viewed it round and round.

"Look at his fine clothes, Fagin," he exclaimed. "Such cloth! Such cut! And the books too! Nothing but a gentleman, Fagin!"

"Delighted to see you looking so well, my dear," said the Jew, mockingly. "The Artful Dodger shall give you another suit for fear you spoil that Sunday one. Why didn't you write, my dear, and say you were coming? We'd have got something warm for supper."

They all laughed merrily at this, especially the Dodger, who had just discovered the five-pound note in Oliver's pocket. There followed a lively dispute between Bill Sikes and the Jew as to who should have the money. Finally Sikes settled the question by seizing the note and tying it up in his handkerchief.

"That's for my share of the trouble," he said, "and not half enough either. You can keep the books if you're fond of reading; if not, you can sell them."

"But they belong to the old gentleman," cried Oliver in distress. "Oh, please send them back. Keep me here if you must, but please, please send back the books and the money. He'll think I stole them."

"You're right, Oliver, you're right," said the Jew, "that's just what he *will* think. It couldn't have happened better."

For some time after this Oliver was very carefully guarded. The Jew was determined to make a thief of him, for until this was brought about, there was always the danger of his escaping. Bill Sikes would soon have found a way of silencing the boy for ever, but the Jew thought such violence both dangerous and unnecessary. It was not long, however, before an excellent opportunity arose of carrying out the Jew's plan.

Fagin had arranged that Bill Sikes should break into a certain house which contained

great wealth. Now this house was so carefully guarded that it was impossible to break in anywhere, except through one window which was so narrow that it was not thought worth while to bar it up. Sikes had made up his mind to force an entry through this window.

"There's just one thing I need," he said, "and that's a boy."

"I have it," cried the Jew. "Just the boy you need!"

"Who?" asked Bill.

"Why, Oliver Twist!" exclaimed the Jew eagerly. "He may not be very well trained, but what does that matter? He has only to open a door for you. Besides, it's time he began to work for his bread, Bill."

"Well, he certainly is just the size," said Bill thoughtfully.

"And he'll do everything you want, Bill, if only you frighten him enough."

"Frighten him? I'll do that all right," said Sikes. "If he starts any tricks once we get to work, you won't see him alive again, Fagin, mark my words!"

The very next evening Nancy was sent to fetch Oliver. As soon as they entered the room Sikes glared fiercely at the lad, took a pocket-pistol from the table, and said:

"Come here, boy. Do you know what this is?"

"Yes, sir," said Oliver.

Sikes then proceeded to load the pistol very carefully.

"Now it is loaded," said he, when he had finished.

"Yes, sir."

"Well," said the robber, grasping Oliver's wrist, and putting the gun to his temple, "if you speak a word when you're out of doors, except when I speak to you, that loading will be inside your head without notice."

The robber put the pistol in his pocket, still holding it in one hand. Then grasping Oliver firmly by the other hand, he set off.

Presently they were joined by the rest of the party. When they reached the end of their journey, they climbed the garden wall, and crept cautiously up to the house. Oliver now saw, for the first time, that he was being taken on a house-breaking expedition. He begged and implored that they would not make him steal. But Sikes soon silenced him with his gun. Then he pointed to a little window about five feet from the ground, and barely large enough to admit a boy of Oliver's size.

"Now, listen," he whispered, drawing a dark lantern from his pocket, and throwing the glare full on Oliver's face. "I am going to put you through there. Take this light, go softly along the passage to the street door, unfasten it, and let us in."

Then Sikes, climbing on the back of one of his companions, lifted Oliver and put him gently through the window, feet first.

Oliver had firmly resolved that at all costs he would dart upstairs from the hall and alarm the family. Filled with this idea, he was advancing stealthily, when Sikes uttered a low cry of warning.

"Come back, come back!"

Startled by the sudden noise, Oliver dropped the lantern. There was a cry of alarm from within the building. Two men appeared at the top of the stairs, carrying a lantern. There was a flash—a loud noise—a curl of smoke—and Oliver staggered back.

Sikes had disappeared for an instant, but was up again and had him by the collar, before the smoke had cleared. He fired his own pistol after the retreating men, and dragged the boy up.

"Clasp your arm tighter," said Sikes as he drew him through the window. "Give me a shawl. They've hit him. Quick! How the boy bleeds!"

Then came the loud ringing of a bell, mingled with the noise of fire-arms and the shouts of men, and the sensation of being carried over uneven ground at a rapid pace. The noises now grew confused. A deadly cold feeling crept over the boy's heart, and he saw and heard nothing more.

STUDY NOTES.

PART III.

1. Why was the Jew very angry when Charley and the Dodger returned without Oliver?

2. Tell how Nancy and Bill Sikes brought Oliver back again.

3. What did the Jew make up his mind to do in order to prevent Oliver from again escaping? What would Bill Sikes have done, if he could have had his way, to prevent Oliver's escape?

4. What part did Oliver have to take in the robbery that the Jew had planned? How did Sikes try to teach Oliver to obey him? What had Oliver made up his mind to do, as soon as he was in the house that was to be robbed?

5. Tell the story of the attempted robbery, as Oliver might have told it later on to Mr. Brownlow.

Word-Study:

ruf'-fian (ruf'-yan): a desperate and brutal person.

no'-ti-fied: informed.

prem'-i-ses (prem'-i-sez): property; a building and all that belongs to it.

ex'-pe-di'-tion (ex'-pe-dish'-un): a journey to carry out some important plan.

PART IV.

Sikes and his companions made off as fast as their burden would permit. But the noise of their pursuers grew nearer and nearer. A couple of dogs were already alarmingly close upon their heels. There was only one chance of escape, and that was to abandon the wounded child. Sikes laid Oliver in a ditch, half hidden

beneath a hedge, and spread a cloak over him Then he bounded off at full speed, and was soon beyond the reach of the fastest of his pursuers.

It was not till late the following morning that Oliver awoke, uttering a low cry of pain. His left arm, roughly bandaged in a shawl, hung heavy and useless at his side. Groaning with pain, he looked feebly round for help, but there was no one in sight. With a desperate effort he managed to stand up. There was a house nearby, which he thought perhaps he could reach. As he drew nearer, he recognized the very house that was to have been robbed the previous evening. Oliver at last reached the door, and knocked faintly. Then his strength failed him, and he sank down upon the doorstep.

Imagine the surprise of the butler, when he opened the door and found Oliver Twist at his feet. He dragged the boy into the hall, and ran upstairs to his mistress in a great state of excitement.

"Here's one of the thieves, ma'am! the one I shot!" he cried.

Fortunately for Oliver, Mrs. Maylie, the mistress of the house, was a kind-hearted, gentle lady. When she heard that Oliver was seriously ill, she ordered him to be carried upstairs to bed, and sent at once for a doctor to attend to his wounds.

After the doctor had finished with his patient, and had satisfied himself that he was in no danger, he persuaded Mrs. Maylie and her niece Rose to take a look at him. The two ladies were astonished to find that the supposed thief was only a child. Rose, especially, was attracted by Oliver's delicate face. She felt sure that, even if he had broken into their house, he could not be really wicked; so she begged her aunt to take pity on him and see that he came to no harm. Mrs. Maylie readily promised that not a hair of his head should be harmed.

As soon as Oliver was well enough, he told his whole story to the two ladies and to the kindly old doctor. They were filled with pity at the tale he told, and were more than ever determined to make the future happy for him.

The first thing that Oliver did, when he recovered, was to try and find his old friend, Mr. Brownlow. But the old gentleman had moved from his former home, and it was some time before he could be found. Meanwhile, something happened which threatened Oliver's new happiness and greatly alarmed his kind friends. He awoke one morning from a light slumber, and saw, peering at him through the window, two villainous faces. They were gone again in a moment, but even in that brief glance Oliver had recognized the Jew, Fagin; and he knew that the wicked old man would not rest till he had recaptured him.

No sooner had this new danger arisen than help came from a most unexpected quarter. The young woman, Nancy, who very much regretted her share in the kidnapping of Oliver Twist, was determined that the poor child should not fall into Fagin's hands again. When she learned that his whereabouts had been discovered, and that his very life was in danger, she paid a secret visit to Rose Maylie, and told her of the danger that threatened the boy. She also told Rose why Fagin was so anxious to recapture Oliver. Fagin had a very wicked friend called Monks. This man knew who Oliver's parents were, but for some reason of his own, did not wish anyone else to know that the boy was alive. He therefore paid Fagin a large sum of money to keep the boy hidden away in the thieves' den. After telling Rose where this man might be found, Nancy hurriedly took her leave.

Mrs. Maylie and her niece were greatly alarmed at this news. But this was no matter for two ladies to deal with. Oliver was never so much in need of a friend. How delighted he was, therefore, to discover his old friend Mr. Brownlow! The old gentleman, too, was overjoyed to learn that no harm had come to his little friend. Since Oliver's disappearance, Mr. Brownlow had made some amazing discoveries. He had learned that Oliver was a half brother to Monks, but as no one knew of his existence, Monks had been able to enjoy a large sum of

money which should have belonged to Oliver. All that Mr. Brownlow wanted to know was where to find this man Monks. And this, of course, Rose was able to tell him.

Monks was so astonished at what Mr. Brownlow had discovered that he made a full confession. This alone saved him from being sent to gaol. Sikes added one more horrible crime to his long list of wicked deeds by murdering Nancy, because she had helped Oliver Twist. He and Fagin were both put to death as dangerous criminals; and you can well believe that no regrets were wasted on either of them.

Mr. Brownlow adopted Oliver, and they lived in a little cottage close to Oliver's dear friends, the Maylies. Oliver's troubles were indeed over, and he lived here as happy as any boy could be.

From the novel by Charles Dickens.
Adapted.

STUDY NOTES.

PART IV.

1. Why was Sikes so anxious to carry Oliver back to the thieves' den? Why did he abandon him (leave him behind)? What then happened to Oliver?

2. Find the part that tells you the thieves had discovered Oliver's whereabouts (where he was living).

3. Who prevented Oliver from being recaptured by the thieves?

4. What were the amazing (astonishing) discoveries that Mr. Brownlow made?

5. Who do you think was the worst of the thieves? Who was the best? Give reasons for both your answers.

6. Write a letter such as Nancy might have written to Oliver as he lay ill at Mrs. Maylie's home.

Word-Study:

but'-ler: the head servant in a large house.
peer'-ing: looking intently (with great attention).
vil'-lain-ous (vil'lin-us): like a villain; very wicked, capable or guilty of great crimes.
a-dop'ted: reared as his own son.

THE THREE FISHERS.

Charles Kingsley.

Three fishers went sailing away to the West,
Away to the West as the sun went down;
Each thought of the woman who loved him the best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town:
For men must work and women must weep,
For there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbour bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;
They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,
And the night rack came rolling up ragged and brown.
But men must work and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbour bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay on the shining sands
  In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
  For those who will never come home to the town:
For men must work and women must weep,
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep;
  And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

STUDY NOTES.

1. This poem tells you of the dangers that certain men face in their daily toil—what men?

2. What line tells you of a coming storm: it is repeated in every verse? What other signs of storms are mentioned?

3. What line tells you that fishermen must carry out their work in all kinds of weather?

Word-Study:

harbour bar: the collection of sand or rock which blocks the mouths of some rivers.

squall: violent gust of wind.

rack: thin broken clouds carried by the wind across the sky.

HOW THOR'S HAMMER WAS LOST AND FOUND.

Tales from the Eddas,
by Wilmot Buxton.

Part I.

Most precious in the eyes of Thor was his magic hammer, Miölnir, of which even the mighty Frost Giants stood in dread.

Always he laid it by his side when he went to rest, and always it was the first thing for which his hand was outstretched when he awoke Judge then of his horror and dismay when, on opening his eyes one morning, the hammer was nowhere to be seen.

Starting up with a roar of rage, Thor commenced to search everywhere for the missing weapon. Up and down his wonderful palace, built of the thunder clouds, he tramped, with a noise that shook the whole city of Asgard. But the hammer was not to be found.

Then he called upon golden-haired Sif, his wife, and bade her help in the search; and still the hammer was nowhere to be seen. It was clear that someone must have stolen it, and, when he found that this was so, Thor's wrath broke all bounds. His bristling red hair and beard stood up on end, and from them flew a whole volley of fiery sparks.

Presently, as the angry Asa was shaking the palace with his thunderous voice, Red Loki came along to inquire into the trouble. He was not likely to feel sorry for Thor; but, always brimful of curiosity, he loved to have a part in every thing that happened.

"What's the matter, Asa Thor?" said he; and Thor replied, lowering his voice as he spoke, for he did not want his loss to be too widely known:

"Now listen to what I tell thee, Loki—'tis a thing which is known neither on earth below nor in heaven above. My hammer's gone."

This news was most interesting to Loki, who had long owed Thor a grudge, which he was afraid to pay openly. "Ho, ho!" said he. "Then shall we soon have the giants turning us out of Asgard, brother Thor."

"Not if you use your wits as you know how," growled Thor, still in a very bad temper. "Come, you call yourself a clever fellow. Find out for me who has robbed me of my thunderbolt, my hammer, my Miölnir."

Then Loki gave a grin and a wink, and promised to do what he could—not because he cared for Thor, but because he loved to be of importance, and was, moreover, really frightened as to what might happen to Asgard, if the magic hammer was not at hand.

It was not long before he noticed that an extraordinary kind of tempest was raging in the regions below—not an orderly kind of tempest, with first some thunder, and then some rain, and then a gust of wind or two, such as Thor was wont to arrange, but a mixture of hail and wind and thunder and lightning and rain and snow, all raging together in a tremendous muddle, so that the earth folk thought the end of the world was come.

This gave Loki a hint, and he began to peer about between the clouds, until at length he saw that the trouble was coming from a certain hill which stood in the centre of Giantland.

Now on the top of this hill lived a certain Thrym, prince of the Frost Giants, who for a long time past had been very envious of the might of Thor. He had, indeed, done his best to imitate him as far as he could, and had managed to get up a very good imitation of lightning and hail and rain; but he had not been able to manage the thunderbolts, for they could only be made by means of Thor's hammer, Miölnir.

All this was well known to Red Loki, and he was therefore not at all surpised to find that, somehow or other, Thrym must have got hold of the magic weapon; for here were thunderbolts crashing about the earth and sky at a terrible rate.

When told of the discovery, Thor flew into a still more tremendous rage, and wanted to rush off at once to fight the giant. But Loki, who loved rather to get a thing by trickery and deceit, persuaded him that violence would never do.

"Remember," said he, "that Thrym *with* the hammer is much stronger than Thor without it. This is a matter which must be managed by clever wit and craft, not by force and loud talking. Leave, therefore, the whole matter to me."

To this Thor very reluctantly agreed.

Then Loki bethought him of some disguise wherein he might visit Giantland in safety, for he was not at all anxious to risk his life. He betook himself to the House of Maidens, over which ruled Freya, fairest of all in Asgard. It was she who used to shake the spring flowers from her golden locks as she passed over the frozen uplands leaving behind her a region of green and smiling beauty. Loki found the goddess, and begged the loan of her magic falcon plumes, in which she used to flit to and fro over the earth; and when she learnt for what purpose he needed them, she gladly lent them to him.

Then Loki took the appearance of a great brown bird, and spreading his wings, he flew away towards Giantland.

It was a long journey, as he already knew, and, although the tempest had now ceased to rage, he found the country of the giants darker and colder and drearier than ever.

The longest journey comes to an end, and at length Loki reached a mountain where sat the Giant Thrym. His huge legs were dangling to the ground, and he was playing with a puppy as large as an elephant.

Perching as near as he dared, Loki gazed at the giant with his bright, round eyes, and was wondering how to begin, when Thrym, who, at a glance, had seen who he really was, said calmly, in a voice as much as possible like Thor's thunderous roar: "Oh, ho! Loki, what are you doing so far from Asgard? Are you not afraid, little fellow as you are, to venture alone into our country?"

Then Loki, thinking to win his way by flattery, replied: "Sad indeed is it in Asgard, now that Miölnir has vanished. Clever was that one who spirited it away from the very side of Thor. Methinks none but you could have done it, O mighty Thrym!"

Pleased with the compliment to his cleverness, the giant chuckled before admitting: "Ay, Loki, the hammer is mine, 'tis very true; and now men will know who really is the Thunderer."

"Ah well!" sighed cunning Loki, "some men are strong by reason of their weapons, and

some are just as strong without. Small need have you, O mighty Thrym, for hammers, but Thor is naught without it. Yet, since all the world knows that you are his master, let him have his plaything back, that we may cease to be troubled by his peevish outcry."

But, though Thrym was as stupid as he was big, he was not to be caught thus.

"No, no, my little Loki," he said. "Mine is the hammer, and deep have I buried it beneath the bottom of the sea. Go, tell this to your Asa folk, and say to them that I will give it back on one condition only—and that is, that they send me Freya, the fairest of maidens, to be my wife."

At this suggestion Loki could scarcely keep from laughing; for the idea of sending the beautiful Freya, the joy and delight of Asgard, to be the wife of this ill-favoured Frost Giant was too absurd for words.

It was not much to him, however, what happened to anyone except himself, so he hastened to reply: "Be sure, O Thrym, that everything I can do to please you shall be done. And if Freya is of the same mind as I, you will soon be welcoming that most sweet maiden to Giantland—farewell!"

So saying, he spread his brown wings and flew back to Asgard, delighted to think of the mischief he could now set brewing.

STUDY NOTES.

Part I.

1. Thor was the god of thunder. Loki was the god of strife. Find the part telling you they lived in the city of Asgard. Describe Thor's palace.

2. What had happened that made Thor so very angry?

Complete the following unfinished sentence: Thor felt powerless without . . . . . .

3. Loki was pleased at Thor's misfortune: why then did he agree to try to find Miölnir?

4. Who was Thrym? Where did he live? What led Loki to think that Thrym had stolen Miölnir? What shows you that Loki was cunning?

5. Tell the story of Loki's visit to Thrym as Loki might have told it to Thor on his return to Asgard.

Word-Study:

Lo'-ki (sound the i as in it).
Mi'öl-nir (meal'-nir).
A'-sa (ai'-sa; sound sa as in sat).
Thrym (trim).
Frey'-a (fry'-a).
ex-traor'-di-na-ry (ex-tror'-di-na-ry): unusual; uncommon; remarkable.
de-ceit' (de-seat'): fraud; trickery.
dis-guise' (dis-gize): to change the appearance of.
fal'-con (fa'-kon; fa rhymes with law): a bird of prey having a short hooked beak, powerful claws, and strong wings.

Part II.

First of all he visited Thor, and told him of what had passed. And the Thunderer, when he heard of Thrym's boastful words, was filled with wild wrath and wanted to start off, then and there, and wrest the hammer from the depths of the sea. But Loki pointed out the difficulties that stood in the way and, leaving the Asa to ponder over his words, he hurried off to Freya and informed her of Thrym's proposal.

The beautiful Freya was walking in her garden, and round her neck she wore her famous necklet of stars. When she heard Loki's suggestion that she should wed a hideous giant, she fell into such a rage that she broke her necklace, and all the stars went falling through the sky, so that men cried: "See how the stars are shooting!"

Meantime the Asa folk had met together to consider all that had happened, and, having calmed the fury of Thor, they pointed out to him that Asgard stood in the gravest danger of an attack which would find them quite unprotected. When they had said this several times over, Thor began to weary of the subject, and he replied with great surliness: "Very well, then. Let Freya go to Thrym as his wife, and then shall we be as before, with Miölnir to defend us."

When Freya heard this, her rage turned to tears and lamentations, and she declared that it would be death to her to send her to the gloomy halls of Giantland, whence she could never hope to revisit the flowery meads and grassy slopes of Asgard. And the Asas, unable to bear the sight of her grief, with one voice declared that they would never spare her from the Home of Bliss.

Then there stepped forward Heimdall, the watchman who sits on guard over the Rainbow Bridge by night and day.

Now Heimdall had the gift of seeing into the future, and the Asas were always ready to hear his words, well knowing them to be wise.

"My plan is this," said he. "Let Thor borrow the clothes of Freya and put a thick veil over his face; and let him go thus to Thrym's castle and pass for his bride. And if he cannot by some means manage to get hold of the hammer when he is there—why, he must give it up altogether."

At this suggestion the Asas clapped their hands with approval—all, indeed, save Thor, who looked most glum, and was very unwilling to agree to the plan.

"Dress me as a bride!" he grumbled. "A pretty maiden I shall make. Ready enough am I to fight, but I will not make myself a laughing-stock if I know it."

But the Asas besought him to give way, while Loki laughed at him for being a coward. Fair Freya, too, appealed with tearful eyes; and so at length, with great reluctance, the Thunderer agreed to do what they wished.

Fortunately the maiden Freya was very tall, but even so it was with some difficulty that they managed to cover the burly form of Thor with her robes.

He insisted, moreover, upon wearing his own shirt of mail and his girdle of strength; and these took much drapery to hide. Great was the laughter in the halls of Asgard that night

as the Battle Maidens brushed and curled Thor's long yellow hair, and set a jewelled head-dress upon it; and finally, when the maidens proceeded to cover up his thick beard and angry eyes with a silken veil, the mirth of the Asas was unrestrained. To complete the disguise, the maidens hung round his neck the famous necklet, which had now been re-strung, and finally Frigga, the wife of All-Father Odin, fastened to his girdle the great bunch of keys proper to brides at a wedding in the Northland.

While this was being done, Loki, more than all, had been convulsed with merriment at the success of his mischief-making. The very sight of Thor's disgusted looks, and of his great hands clenched with rage under the delicate veil, nearly killed him with laughter; and when all was ready, he declared himself unable to lose an atom of the fun in store.

"Let me go with you," he implored. "See, I will dress myself as your handmaiden. Ah, you had better agree, for without me to prompt you, you will never play your part."

So Loki was dressed as a waiting-maid, and took his seat by the side of Thor in the goat-car. Loud was the laughter in Asgard, as the Asas watched the two drive off together, and heard the roar of the Thunderer's voice coming from the folds of a meek maiden's veil, as he urged his goats upon their course. Long and

stormy was that ride to Giantland, for Thor was still in the worst of tempers, and drove his chariot so furiously that

> "The mountains crashed,
> The earth stood in flames,"

as the hoofs of the goats clattered over mountains and waters, striking sparks wherever they touched a rock.

Thrym was quite overjoyed when he heard that a chariot containing the two maidens was approaching his door. Away ran his servants in different directions, some with orders to make ready a grand banquet, some to prepare the chamber of the bride, some to receive her at the door.

The giant himself assisted them to alight, and looked proudly at the stately figure of his bride; but he made no attempt to see her face, since it is the custom in the Northland for the bride to remain veiled until the marriage has been completed.

"A bride worthy of a giant!" murmured his servants, as Thrym led her to a lofty seat beside his own great throne of gold; and they looked with approval also on the buxom form of the waiting-maid, who stood, closely veiled, behind her mistress's chair.

Now the journey had been long and cold, and it was with joy that the new-comers noticed that the preparations for the banquet were complete, for they were exceedingly hungry.

The giants are huge eaters, and they gathered round the board, whereon were displayed an enormous ox roasted whole, a vast dish of salmon and various other dainties. But because the bride was a woman, and modest withal, they brought her tiny morsels on a dainty golden plate.

This was too much for Thor, who had always possessed a most healthy appetite, and was now more than usually ready for his supper. Gradually drawing nearer to the table, whilst the others were busy with the meal, he managed to get hold of the dish of roasted ox, and within a few minutes the whole of the animal had disappeared.

Then he put out his hand to the platter of salmon, and in eight mouthfuls finished off eight of the great fish. After this he noticed a large plate full of cakes and sweetmeats, which was set apart for the ladies of the party. Of these, too, he made short work. Finally, feeling thirsty after his huge meal, he took up two barrels of mead, and tossed them off, one after another, down his great throat. Then he sat back on his chair with a sigh of deep content.

These proceedings had been watched by Loki with uneasiness, but by Thrym with open-mouthed dismay. Was this the usual appetite of this dainty maiden, who had eaten more than the company of giants? But Loki bent towards

him and whispered in his ear that the thought of marrying had so excited Freya that she had eaten nothing for eight days, and had therefore been on the point of starvation.

This reassured the giant, and, being now himself filled with mead, he drew nearer and, lifting a corner of the veil, tried to kiss the cheek of his future bride.

But Thor, who was longing to be at close grips with him, threw him such a fiery glance that he drew quickly back, saying: "Why does fair Freya's eye burn like a spark from a furnace?" "Pooh!" whispered Loki again, "that is nothing but her love for you, which for eight days has raged like a flaming fire."

This news was still more pleasant to hear, and Thrym, in high good humour, cried: "Bring in the hammer, my wedding gift, wherewith to plight the maid. For when I have laid it on her lap she will be my own for ever, and together we will work dire evil against the Asa folk, whom I hate with all my heart."

What was that unmaidenly sound that came from under the silken veil at these words? But though Loki turned pale to hear it, Thrym, busy sending for the hammer, did not pay any heed.

Back came the giant's servants at length, bending under the weight of Miölnir. And as

they bowed before the silent maiden, sitting with meekly bent head upon the throne, Thrym cried with a merry jest: "See, here is little Thor's tiny plaything—a pretty toy truly for his feeble hands. Take it, fair Freya, as my wedding gift."

"And take *that* as mine!" roared Thor, in a voice of thunder, as he flung off the veil and rose to his full height. And with the words he swung the hammer once—and ere the eye could follow its movement, it had crashed through Thrym's skull, and had knocked over a round dozen of his guests. Yet again did it swing in the Asa's hand, and this time it left not a giant standing in the hall.

A third time it was swung, and on this occasion the roof and walls of the palace came tumbling on every side, and only Thor and Loki were left alive amid the ruins.

"Ha! ha!' laughed Red Loki, "that was neatly done, fair Freya."

Thor, who was now busily tearing off the hated robes and veil, stayed to look threateningly at his companion. "No more of that, Loki," said he; "the thing had to be done, 'tis true, but talk not to me again of this woman's work. We will remember only that I am the Thunderer, and that my hammer that was lost is found."

So they drove back peacefully to Asgard.

And this is the end of the tale of How Thor's Hammer was lost and found.

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STUDY NOTES.

PART II.

1. What was the condition on which Thrym agreed to give back to Thor the magic hammer?

2. Why did Thor not go to Thrym and make him give up the magic hammer?

3. Why was Freya unwilling to marry Thrym?

4. Why was Thor agreeable that Freya should become the wife of Thrym? Who prevented Freya from leaving Asgard?

5. What plan did Heimdall suggest for getting back the hammer? Tell how his plan was successfully carried out.

Word-Study:

Heim'-dall (**heim** rhymes with lime: sound **all** as **arl**).
sur'-li-ness: sullen behaviour.
lam'-en-ta'-tions: wailings; moanings.
be-sought': begged; implored.
re-luc'-tance: unwillingness.
con-vul'-sed: doubled up.
bux'-om: stout and jolly.

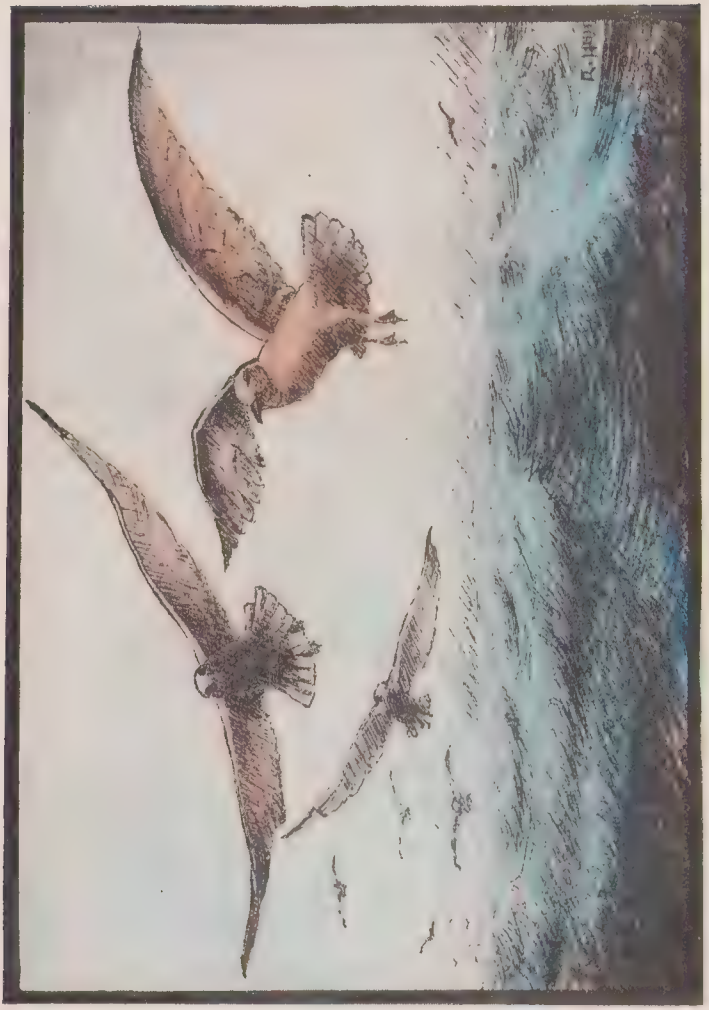
THE SEA-GULL.

Mary Howitt.

Oh, the white Sea-gull, the wild Sea-gull,
  A joyful bird is he.
As he lies like a cradled thing at rest
  In the arms of a sunny sea!
The little waves rock to and fro,
  And the white Gull lies asleep,
As the fisher's bark, with breeze and tide,
  Goes merrily over the deep.
The ship, with her fair sails set, goes by,
  And her people stand to note
How the Sea-gull sits on the rocking waves,
  As if in an anchored boat.

The sea is fresh, the sea is fair,
  And the sky calm overhead,
And the Sea-gull lies on the deep, deep sea,
  Like a king in his royal bed!
Oh, the white Sea-gull, the bold Sea-gull,
  A joyful bird is he,
Throned like a king, in calm repose
  On the breast of the heaving sea!

The waves leap up, the wild wind blows,
  And the Gulls together crowd,
And wheel about, and madly scream
  To the deep sea roaring loud.
And let the sea roar ever so loud,
  And the winds pipe ever so high,
With a wilder joy the bold Sea-gull
  Sends forth a wilder cry.—



Oh, the white sea-gull, the wild sea-gull,
A joyful bird is he. . . . . .

For the Sea-gull, he is a daring bird,
  And he loves with the storm to sail;
To ride in the strength of the billowy sea,
  And to breast the driving gale!
The little boat, she is tossed about,
  Like a sea-weed, to and fro;
The tall ship reels like a drunken man,
  As the gusty tempests blow.

But the Sea-gull laughs at the fear of man,
  And sails in a wild delight
On the torn-up breast of the night-black sea,
  Like a foam-cloud, calm and white.
The waves may rage and the winds may roar,
  But he fears not wreck nor need;
For he rides the sea, in its stormy strength,
  As a strong man rides his steed!

Oh, the white Sea-gull, the bold Sea-gull!
  He makes on the shore his nest,
And he tries what the inland fields may be;
  But he loveth the sea the best!
And away from land a thousand leagues,
  He goes 'mid surging foam;
What matter to him is land or shore,
  For the sea is his truest home!

And away to the north, 'mid ice-rocks stern,
  And amid the frozen snow,
To a sea that is lone and desolate,
  Will the wanton Sea-gull go.
For he careth not for the winter wild,
  Nor those desert regions chill;
In the midst of the cold, as on calm blue seas.
  The Sea-gull hath his will!

And the dead whale lies on the northern shores,
  And the seal, and the sea-horse grim,
And the death of the great sea-creatures makes
  A full, merry feast for him!
Oh, the wild Sea-gull, the bold Sea-gull!
  As he screams in his wheeling flight;
As he sits on the waves in storm or calm,
  All cometh to him aright!
All cometh to him as he liketh best;
  Nor any his will gainsay;
And he rides on the waves like a bold young
    king,
  That was crowned but yesterday!

STUDY NOTES.

1. Find the lines in the first verse which make you think of the sea as the sea-gull's nurse. What lines tell you that the sea is calm?

2. Find the lines in which the sea-gull is compared to a king. What is the sea-gull's kingdom?

3. What verses tell you that the sea-gull is as much at home on the raging sea as on the rocking waves? Two lines give you a very striking picture of the stormy sea: find them.

4. What lines tell you that the sea-gull is master of the Arctic seas as well as of the calm blue seas? What is his reward for visiting these far-away places?

5. What line, in the last verse, gives you a clear picture of the power and pride of the sea-gull?

Word-Study:

wan'-ton: heedless.
gain'-say': contradict.

A STORY OF WILLIAM WALLACE.

Wallace had just driven the English invaders out of Scotland, but he knew only too well that it would not be long before Edward I. made another attempt to conquer Scotland. He therefore made up his mind to undertake a voyage to France with a small band of his trusty followers, in order to seek assistance from the French King.

The Scottish champion was steering for the port of Dieppe when a sail suddenly appeared on the horizon. Observing the anxious looks of the sailors, Wallace asked the captain of the ship what was the cause of their alarm. "That tall ship you see bearing down upon us," replied the captain, "is commanded by the celebrated rover, Thomas de Longueville. He is a Frenchman by birth, and an enemy to all who sail upon the seas. No vessel can escape him, so speedy is his ship; and no crew can hope to resist him when, following his usual custom of fighting, he throws himself on board at the head of his followers."

Wallace smiled sternly, while the master of the ship, with alarm on his countenance and tears in his eyes, described to him the certainty of their being captured by the Red Rover, a

name given to de Longueville, because he usually displayed the blood-red flag which he had now hoisted.

"I will clear the narrow seas of this rover," said Wallace. Then calling upon some ten or twelve of his own followers, he commanded them to arm themselves and lie upon the deck so as not to be seen by the enemy. He then ordered the captain on pain of death to steer the ship in such a manner that he would seem to be trying to escape, while all the time he would really be permitting the pirate ship to come up with him. Wallace himself then lay down on the deck, in order that the pirates might not see anything which would lead them to believe that any resistance would be offered them.

In about a quarter of an hour de Longueville's vessel ran alongside that of the Champion, and the Red Rover, casting out grappling irons to make sure of his prize, jumped on deck in complete armour, followed by his men, who gave a terrible shout as though victory had already been secured. But the armed Scots started up at once, and the Rover found himself unexpectedly engaged with desperate fighters. Wallace rushed on the pirate captain, and a dreadful combat began between them. So furiously did they fight that the followers of Wallace and those of Red Rover

seemed by one consent to cease their fighting in order to watch the struggle of the two chiefs. The pirate fought as well as man could do, but Wallace's strength was beyond that of ordinary mortals. He dashed the sword from the Rover's hand, and would assuredly have cut him down, had not the pirate closed with him in hope of overpowering him in the grapple. They fell on the deck locked in each other's arms, but the Frenchman fell undermost. Wallace then seized him by the gorget, and would certainly have strangled him had he not by signs asked for quarter. His men now threw down their weapons and begged for mercy. The victor granted them their lives, but he took possession of their vessel and he kept them prisoners.

When he came in sight of the French harbour, Wallace alarmed the place by displaying the Rover's colours, as if de Longueville were coming to pillage the town. The bells were rung, horns were blown, and the citizens were hurrying to arms when the scene changed. The Scottish Lion on his shield of gold was raised above the pirate's flag, a sign which meant that the Champion of Scotland was approaching like an eagle with his prey in his clutch. He landed with his prisoner, and carried him to the Court of France, where he successfully pleaded with the French monarch to forgive de Longueville. It is even said that the King made him a knight

and offered to take him into his service. But so great was de Longueville's love for Wallace that he would not part from him: he returned to Scotland with Wallace, and fought bravely by his side in many a desperate battle.

STUDY NOTES.

1. Read the story of William Wallace in your history books; you will then understand why he is called the Champion in this story.

2. What was Wallace's reason for making a journey to France? How was it that the captain recognized the pirate ship? Why did he so greatly dread this ship?

3. Describe Wallace's plan to defeat the Red Rover. If the pirate commander had seen the armed Scots aboard Wallace's ship, what would he have done to make victory certain? Remember his ship was heavily armed with cannon.

4. Tell the story of the fight between the Red Rover and William Wallace.

5. Why did Wallace ask the French King to pardon de Longueville—was it because Wallace was kind hearted or because he admired the bravery of the Red Rover? What shows you that de Longueville ever afterwards remained loyal to Wallace?

Word-Study:

Di-eppe' (de-ep'): seaport in France, on the English Channel.

de Longueville (de lon-g'-vel; the g is sounded as in go): a French surname.

grappling irons: hooked irons, something like fishing hooks, used for throwing on board an enemy ship and holding it fast.

gor'-get (gor'-jet): a piece of armour, whether of chain mail or plate, used to protect the throat and upper part of the breast.

quar'-ter: mercy.

THE CALL OF THE BUSH.

A. B. Paterson—The Man from Snowy River.

The city folk go to and fro
  Behind a prison's bars;
They never feel the breezes blow,
  And never see the stars;
They never hear in blossomed trees,
  The music, low and sweet,
Of wild birds making melodies,
Nor catch the little, laughing breeze
  That whispers in the wheat.

The wind is in the barley grass;
  The wattles are in bloom;
The breezes greet us as they pass
  With honey-sweet perfume;
The parakeets go screaming by,
  With flash of golden wing;
And, from the swamp, the wild ducks cry
Their long-drawn note of revelry,
  Rejoicing in the spring.

So throw the weary pen aside
  And let the papers rest,
For we must saddle up and ride
  Towards the blue hill's breast;

And we must travel far and fast
  Across their rugged maze,
To find the spring of youth at last,
And call back from the buried past
  The old Australian ways.

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STUDY NOTES.

1. In the first verse you are told of some of the joys of life that are missed by people who live in great cities: what are these joys? In some great manufacturing cities the inhabitants would not be able to see the stars: why? It is, of course, not true that in most cities a person would be unable to see the stars. In what way is the city like a prison: is it because one sees policemen there, or because the high buildings on either side of the streets seem to shut in the people there?

2. In the second verse some of the delights of the bush are named and described: what are they?

3. What lines make you think that a visit to the bush will give new life to people working in city offices?

Word-Study:

mel'-o-dy: sweet sounds.

per'-fume or **per-fume'** (accent the second syllable in pronouncing the word as here used): scent; sweet smell.

par'-a-keet: a small parrot with a long tail.

maze: a confused network of paths.

the spring of youth: a fabled fountain whose waters were believed to make old people young again.

THE HUNTER'S SONG.

Barry Cornwall.

Hark, hark! who calleth the maiden morn
From her sleep in the woods and the stubble
corn?
The horn—the horn!
The merry, sweet ring of the hunter's horn.

Now through the copse where the fox is found,
And over the stream, at a mighty bound,
And over the high lands and over the low,
O'er furrows, o'er meadows, the hunters go!
Away! as a hawk flies full at his prey
So flieth the hunter—away, away!

Hark, hark!—what sound on the wind is borne?
'Tis the conquering voice of the hunter's horn:
The horn—the horn!
The merry, bold voice of the hunter's horn.

Sound, sound the horn! To the hunter good
What's the gully deep or the roaring flood:
Right over he bounds, as the wild stag bounds,
At the heels of his swift, sure, silent hounds.

Hark, hark!—now home, and dream till morn
Of the bold, sweet sound of the hunter's horn!
The horn—the horn!
Oh, the sound of all sounds is the hunter's
horn!

STUDY NOTES.

1. What lines tell you that the huntsmen are up before daybreak? The maiden morn is pictured as sleeping in . . . . . Complete this unfinished sentence. What sound awakens the morn?

2. Read the lines that enable you to follow the hunters in their chase after the fox. What lines tell you of the speed of the huntsmen? To what is this speed compared?

3. Complete the following unfinished sentence: The bold huntsman fears neither . . . . . .

4. What lines tell you that the sound of the horn is the sweetest music the huntsman ever hears.

Word-Study:

maiden morn: the morn is here pictured as a young unmarried woman.

stub'-ble: the part of the stalks of wheat, barley, oats, etc., left in the ground after the heads have been harvested.

copse (kops): a thicket; a wood of small growth; a clump of brushwood.

JOHNNY AND HIS FEATHERED FRIENDS.

James Pollard.

"Peep-eep! Cheep-eep! Chee-reep!" That was the alarm cry of Myz, the dusky minah, ringing out from the tips of a white gum in the Ondon Forest. It was taken up by a dozen other grey clad kinsfolk of Myz, and soon the warm spring air was a-quiver with their clamour.

"Phew-istle! Tu-ittle! Phit-ossle-lerrell-ill!" sang Mel, the white-eared honey-eater, from a neighbouring tree. The joyous notes tumbled forth from a full heart and bursting throat, dying away softly on the trembling air, like little ripples of sunlight.

"That's right, Mel," murmured little Johnny Wiseman from his seat in the fork of a red gum. "Myz is trying to pretend he doesn't recognize me." Then Johnny made a few notes in a little book resting on his knees:—"Myz's cry: Look out! Danger! Wake up! Mel's answer: Why you silly! That's only Johnny, a little friendly boy."

Mel whirred across to Johnny's tree, and the boy looked up with a smile to where the bird, in its showy coat of yellow and olive and black, perched to whistle its lively melody.

"Too fast, too fast!" laughed Johnny. "But I suppose you are just reminding those minahs that I'd be the first to help them if there was any real danger."

Suddenly Johnny grew alert. Myz had ceased his crying, and, making a sudden dive to the ground, had pounced upon a bardee. But, before he could return to safety with his prize, there came a sudden rush of air, a whistling of heavy wings, and Rac, the brown hawk, swooped down upon him. There was a flurry of feathers and dust as the big bird seized its prey.

Johnny, stirred by fear and rage, gripped the roughened bark of the limbs around him; then he gave a piercing whistle. It might have been a signal to all the birds within hearing; for, in a few seconds, a crowd of minahs and honey-eaters, a few wagtails, a magpie, and a flock of tits were whirring round the struggling pair. The hawk released his prey, and fled before that excited outraged mob. Myz gained the shelter of a tree, and as he smoothed his ruffled plumage he cried aloud for sympathy.

Taking up his note-book, Johnny wrote:—"Birds are very loyal to each other when in danger." Then he focussed his field glasses on poor Myz. A few feathers were gone from the bird's back and tail, and there was a gash in his shoulder. He looked exhausted.

"That was a near thing," Johnny said aloud. "I can understand a man wanting to shoot a hawk. But then, men who go bird shooting are not usually satisfied with shooting hawks. Yes, Myz, I dare say there are men who could kill you in colder blood than ever Rac could."

Johnny wrote busily for some moments, describing the minah's narrow escape. He was interrupted by a persistent "cheep-eep! Cheereep-eep!" from the minahs. He stopped his work and watched them keenly. "There's some thing troubling them," he said presently, and glanced around him to see what it could be.

"I suppose I have alarmed them," said a deep, rather pleasant voice, as Johnny turned. The man had a camera slung over one shoulder, and carried a gun under his arm. Johnny's eyes shone with interest.

"You must be Mr. Blane," he said.

The man nodded, smiling. He was the famous bird-man; so it was not surprising that Johnny, having heard of his visit to Ondon Forest, at once recognized him.

"And you are Johnny Wiseman," the man returned. For Johnny, too, was a naturalist, of whom the Ondon farming folk were oddly proud, although they did not understand him; and Mr. Blane had learned a good deal about him on the first day of his visit to the district.

Mr. Blane studied the lean, brown-faced, slightly crippled lad, and decided that he liked Johnny.

"They tell me you and the birds are great friends," he said.

"Oh, yes. That's because we are so much together," Johnny replied. "Birds will trust you if you trust them. In fact," he added, "they will trust you first if you let them. But I suppose you know that," he added quickly, recalling that this man was famous for his knowledge of birds.

Mr. Blane did not answer. For some moments he appeared lost in thought.

"I came to photograph a blue wren I found nesting yesterday," he said presently. "Perhaps you would like to come too?"

"Indeed I would," Johnny answered promptly.

"Which one is it?"

"Which one?" repeated Mr. Blane in surprise.

"There are three nests of blue wrens within half a mile of here," Johnny replied.

"Are there? Well, you can show me the other two later."

Johnny was about to agree, but there was something about the man's eager voice which warned him to make no rash promises. He followed Mr. Blane in silence.

They had gone about a hundred yards, when Mr. Blane stopped before a patch of scrub, and turned to Johnny. The boy was smiling.

"She is in that pin-bush," he said. "That is why I call her Pinhead. There are four chicks in her nest, and they will fly to-morrow."

"To-morrow? No. I am counting on two more days," Mr. Blane replied.

Johnny looked up at the sky.

"Look at those wind clouds, Mr. Blane," he said quietly.

"There'll be rain before long, and those babies won't wait for it."

Johnny was so sure of this that Mr. Blane came to believe, almost against his will, that he was wrong, and Johnny was right.

A spot of brilliant blue flashed among the fronds of a wattle tree near by, and a burst of song was flung carelessly to the breeze.

"That's her mate," said Johnny.

Mr. Blane nodded. "Yes, I want him for my collection. I mean to shoot him to-morrow. He won't go far away for a few days, even if the young do leave the nest to-morrow."

Johnny stood as though rooted to the spot. His blood seemed to freeze. This man posed as a bird-lover. He was learned in the ways of birds. He lectured and wrote in the cause of bird protection. Yet he could stand here in the

Ondon Forest amidst the wild folk that Johnny loved so dearly, and calmly remark that he intended to shoot this beautiful bird. A feeling of horror and disgust swept through Johnny at the sight of the man's gun. But he choked back the torrent of protest that rose to his lips, and, outwardly as calm as before, he walked right up to where the beautiful blue bird was perched. Mr. Blane, watching in amazement, saw the boy raise his hand. The bird lowered its head as though inviting a caress; and the boy's lean fingers ran slowly, gently, along the soft feathered coat. The bird flew on to another bush, and burst into song once more.

"Do that again, Johnny!" exclaimed Mr. Blane, delightedly. I'd like a picture of you both."

But Johnny shook his head.

"I'll show you something else," he said.

He walked quietly towards the pin-bush, from which came the thin pipings of the young. As the boy parted the branches the mother bird drew near, anxiously hopping from twig to twig, her beak laden with choice fare for her babes.

Johnny beckoned the man, who unstrapped his camera and slowly drew near. When he had come close enough, the lad held up his hand. Mr. Blane stopped and focussed his camera. The picture he got was of four grey feathered

birds perched rather shakily on Johnny's right hand, whilst the mother wren, perched on a finger of the boy's left hand, delivered its mouthful of food into the gaping beaks. The hen flew away in search of more food, and Johnny gently replaced the young in the nest. Then he turned, and looking steadily at Mr. Blane, "Do you still intend to shoot that blue bird?" he asked.

The man's face lost its friendly expression, and the gleam of admiration died in his eyes.

"Yes, Johnny," he said quietly. "Some day I shall give my collection of bird skins to a museum, and I want to make it as complete as possible. But I don't suppose you will understand."

"No," the lad agreed, and he turned away so as not to betray the mist in his eyes and the storm in his breast.

"What about those two other nests you know?" Mr. Blane inquired lightly, anxious to avoid this unpleasant subject.

Johnny smiled—a strange little smile expressing pain.

"Well, what of them?" he asked gently.

Mr. Blane did not answer, for he knew that Johnny would not show him the nests now. They were silent for a few minutes.

"I think I'd better go home," Johnny said presently, and he turned away.

Mr. Blane's face was thoughtful and rather grave as he stared after the departing boy. But his purpose remained unchanged.

Next morning at dawn Johnny Wiseman stood under the same trees listening to the carols of the Ondon magpies.

"I wonder what it would feel like to shoot and stuff you all," he murmured, as he looked up at them. Then he turned to the task he had planned for himself.

He was very happy as he worked, for his many bird friends were stirring around him—whistling, calling, piping, and singing. Now and then he would stop to greet one or other of the feathered creatures which came near him, returning its bright glances and pert chatter with soft companionable talk.

It took him three hours to launch the four young wrens on their life adventure. He began by perching them on a bush a few yards away from their nest. When their parents had become used to seeing them there, he shifted the youngsters to another bush. After several such moves they showed signs of a new restlessness. They fluttered and trembled and swayed on branch after branch. They felt strange new stirrings of muscles and nerves. One flapped its wings. Another did likewise. The parent birds hovered near, crying and whistling, now anxious, now proud. They scolded, they sang, they coaxed, and they urged. At last the young birds flew.

Johnny left them a full mile away from their old nest. He had seen each bird in turn fly at least a chain. They would stay together for many days, a happy family. As he returned, the brilliant blue bird poured after him his joyful melody.

Johnny made his way back to the old nest. and lay down in the scrub waiting and listening. Soon the minahs told him that Mr. Blane was coming. He peered through the scrub, an impish smile on his face as he watched.

Mr. Blane stopped quite close to where Johnny lay hidden. He set down his camera, and took up his gun. Then he moved slowly forward, scanning the bushes for the flash of blue he so much desired to see. Presently a puzzled look appeared on his face. He missed the thin piping of the baby wrens, and there was a new voice coming from the bush that was altogether too loud for a wren. He drew near and parted the bushes, then gave an exclamation of disgust. As Johnny heard this, he gave a low laugh, and rising quickly to his feet, withdrew into the forest.

Mr. Blane heard the smothered laughter Then he stared down at the solitary occupant of the nest—a young cuckoo. And at last he understood.

With the Author's kind permission.

STUDY NOTES.

1. What tells you that Johnny was a bird-lover? What also tells you that he studied the habits of birds?

2. How did Johnny save Myz's life? Write out Johnny's account of the minah's narrow escape.

3. What tells you that Mr. Blane, the bird-man, was not a bird-lover? What two things did he want to do in the Ondon Forest? Find the part telling you that Johnny knew more about the birds of Ondon Forest than did Mr. Blane. What did Johnny do that showed Mr. Blane he was indeed a bird-lover?

4. Write out Johnny's account of how he prevented Mr. Blane from adding the blue wren to his collection.

Word-Study:

fo'-cussed (fo'-cust): arranged the field glasses so as to get a clear picture.

per-sist'-ent: continuing steadfastly; determined continuance.

nat'-u-ral-ist: one who studies the history of animals (their customs, etc.).

oc'-cu-pant: one who occupies or is in possession of a thing.

WINKLE ON SKATES.

Charles Dickens.

"Now," said Wardle, after a substantial lunch with the agreeable items of strong beer and cherry-brandy, had been done ample justice to: "what say you to an hour on the ice? We shall have plenty of time."

"Capital!" said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

"Prime!" ejaculated Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"You skate, of course, Winkle?" said Wardle.

"Ye-yes; oh, yes," replied Mr. Winkle. "I—I—am *rather* out of practice."

"Oh, *do* skate, Mr. Winkle," said Arabella. "I like to see it so much."

"Oh, it is *so* graceful," said another young lady.

A third young lady said it was elegant, and a fourth expressed her opinion that it was "swan-like."

"I should be very happy, I'm sure," said Mr. Winkle, reddening; "but I have no skates."

This objection was at once overruled. Trundle had a couple of pairs, and the fat boy announced that there were half-a-dozen more downstairs: whereat Mr. Winkle expressed exquisite delight, and looked exquisitely uncomfortable.

Old Wardle led the way to a pretty large sheet of ice; and the fat boy and Mr. Weller having shovelled and swept away the snow which had fallen on it during the night, Mr. Bob Sawyer adjusted his skates with a dexterity which to Mr. Winkle was perfectly marvellous, and described circles with his left leg, and cut figures of eight, and inscribed upon the ice, without once stopping for breath, a great many other pleasant and astonishing devices, to the excessive satisfaction of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman and the ladies; which reached a pitch of positive enthusiasm, when old Wardle and Benjamin Allen, assisted by the aforesaid Bob Sawyer, performed some mystic evolutions, which they called a reel.

Mr. Pickwick addresses the Club.

All this time, Mr. Winkle, with his face and hands blue with the cold, had been forcing a gimlet into the soles of his feet, and putting his skates on, with the points behind, and getting the straps into a very complicated and entangled state, with the assistance of Mr. Snodgrass, who knew rather less about skates than a Hindoo. At length, however, with the assistance of Mr. Weller, the unfortunate skates were firmly screwed and buckled on, and Mr. Winkle was raised to his feet.

"Now, then, sir," said Sam, in an encouraging tone; "off with you, and show them how to do it."

"Stop, Sam, stop!" said Mr. Winkle, trembling violently, and clutching hold of Sam's arms with the grasp of a drowning man. "How slippery it is, Sam!"

"Not an uncommon thing upon ice, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "Hold up, sir!"

This last observation of Mr. Weller's bore reference to a demonstration Mr. Winkle made at the instant, of a frantic desire to throw his feet in the air, and dash the back of his head on the ice.

"These—these—are very awkward skates; aren't they, Sam?" inquired Mr. Winkle, staggering.

"I'm afeerd there's a orkard gen'l'm'n in 'em, sir," replied Sam.

"Now, Winkle," cried Mr. Pickwick, quite unconscious that there was anything the matter. "Come; the ladies are all anxiety."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Winkle, with a ghastly smile. "I'm coming."

"Just a goin' to begin," said Sam, endeavouring to disengage himself. "Now, sir, start off!"

"Stop an instant, Sam," gasped Mr. Winkle, clinging most effectionately to Mr. Weller. "I find I've got a couple of coats at home that I don't want, Sam. You may have them Sam."

"Thank'ee sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Never mind touching your hat, Sam," said Mr. Winkle, hastily. "You needn't take your hand away to do that. I meant to have given you five shillings this morning for a Christmas-box, Sam. I'll give it you this afternoon, Sam."

"You're very good, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Just hold me at first, Sam; will you?" said Mr. Winkle. "There—that's right. I shall soon get in the way of it, Sam. Not too fast, Sam; not too fast."

Mr. Winkle stooping forward, with his body half doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller, in a very singular and un-swan-like manner, when Mr. Pickwick most innocently shouted from the opposite bank:

"Sam!"

"Sir?"

"Here! I want you."

"Let go, sir," said Sam. "Don't you hear the governor a callin'? Let go, sir."

With a violent effort Mr. Weller disengaged himself from the grasp of the agonized Pickwickian, and, in so doing, administered a considerable impetus to the unhappy Mr. Winkle. With an accuracy which no degree of dexterity or practice could have insured, that unfortunate gentleman bore swiftly down into the centre of the reel, at the very moment when Mr. Bob Sawyer was performing a flourish of unparalleled beauty. Mr. Winkle struck wildly against him, and with a loud crash they both fell heavily down. Mr. Pickwick ran to the spot. Bob Sawyer had risen to his feet, but Mr. Winkle was far too wise to do anything of the kind, in skates. He was seated on the ice, making spasmodic efforts to smile; but anguish was depicted on every lineament of his countenance.

"Are you hurt?" inquired Mr. Benjamin Allen, with great anxiety.

"Not much," said Mr. Winkle, rubbing his back very hard.

"I wish you'd let me bleed you," said Mr. Benjamin, with great eagerness.

"No, thank you," replied Mr. Winkle hurriedly.

"I really think you had better," said Allen.

"Thank you," replied Mr. Winkle; "I'd rather not."

"What do *you* think, Mr. Pickwick?" inquired Bob Sawyer.

Mr. Pickwick was excited and indignant. He beckoned to Mr. Weller, and said in a stern voice, "Take his skates off."

"No; but really I had scarcely begun," remonstrated Mr. Winkle.

"Take his skates off," repeated Mr. Pickwick firmly.

The command was not to be resisted. Mr. Winkle allowed Sam to obey it in silence.

"Lift him up," said Mr. Pickwick. Sam assisted him to rise.

Mr. Pickwick retired a few paces apart from the bystanders; and, beckoning his friend to approach, fixed a searching look upon him, and uttered in a low, but distinct and emphatic tone, these remarkable words:

"You're a humbug, sir."

"A what?" said Mr. Winkle, starting.

"A humbug, sir. I will speak plainer, if you wish it. An impostor, sir."

With those words, Mr. Pickwick turned slowly on his heel, and rejoined his friends.

STUDY NOTES.

This story is from *Pickwick Papers*. Pickwick is a respectable elderly gentleman, bald-headed and accustomed to wear circular spectacles; he gets into many amusing situations.

He and his friends form a group of which Winkle poses as the sportsman, but Winkle's friends lose faith in him when they see his attempts at riding and skating.

1. Why did Winkle say he was rather out of practice in skating?

2. How do you know he was quite ignorant of skating?

3. Why did Winkle offer kindnesses to Sam?
4. Why did Mr. Allen offer to bleed Winkle?
5. What did Mr. Pickwick think of Winkle?

Word-Study:

substantial: solid.
elegant: beautiful.
swan-like: graceful.
overruled: put aside.
announced: gave information.
exquisite: charming.
exquisitely: charmingly.
adjusted: fixed.
dexterity: cleverness.
marvellous: wonderful.
inscribed: carved in writing.
devices: plans.
excessive: more than needed.
positive: certain.
mystic: wonderful.
evolutions: movements.
reel: a kind of dance.
gimlet: a tool for boring holes.
complicated: puzzling.
demonstration: something shown or explained.
frantic: wild.
unconscious: unaware.
agonized: pained.
impetus: force of movement.
accuracy: correctness.
afeerd: means afraid in Sam's speech.
orkard: used by Sam to mean awkward.
unparalleled: not equalled.
spasmodic: fitful.
anguish: sorrow.
depicted: expressed.
lineament: line.
countenance: face.
remonstrated: pleaded.
impostor: one who is not what he pretends to be.

THE LAST OF HIS TRIBE.

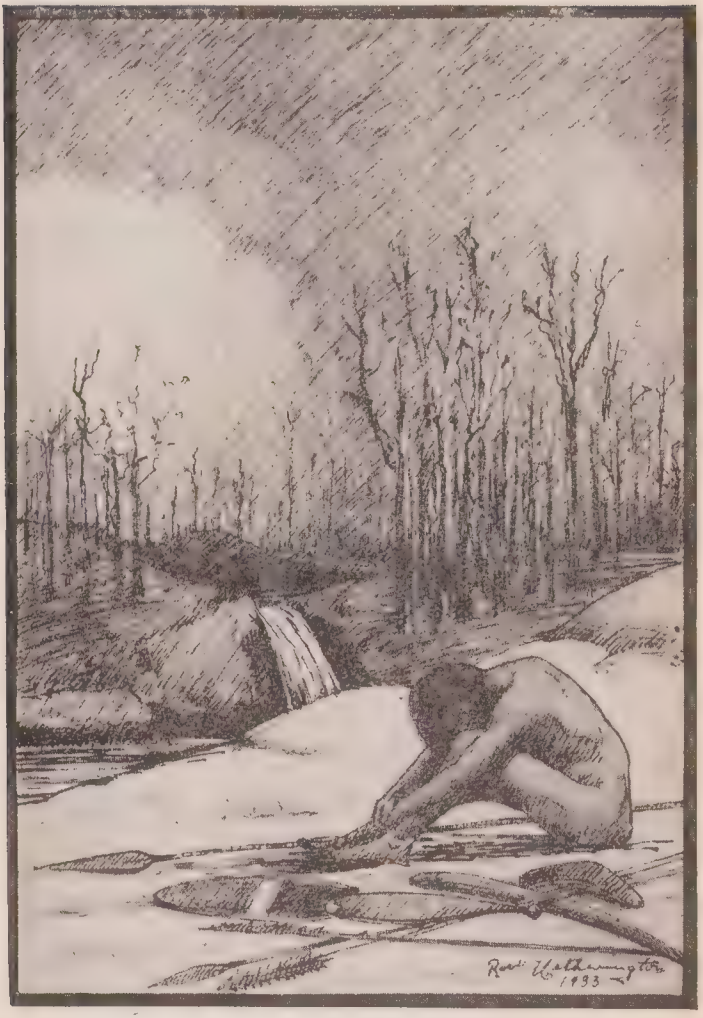
Henry Kendall.

He crouches and buries his face on his knees,
  And hides in the dark of his hair;
For he cannot look up to the storm-smitten trees,
  Or think of the loneliness there—
  Of the loss and the loneliness there.

The wallaroos grope through the tufts of the grass,
  And turn to their coverts in fear;
But he sits in the ashes and lets them pass
  Where the boomerangs sleep with the spear—
  With the womera, nulla, and spear.

Uloola! behold him! The thunder that breaks
  On the tops of the rocks with the rain,
And the wind which drives up with the salt of the lakes,
  Have made him a hunter again—
  A hunter and fisher again.

For his eyes have been full of a smouldering thought;
  And he dreams of the hunts of yore,
And of foes that he sought, and of fights that he fought
  With those who will battle no more—
  Who will go to the battle no more.



He crouches and buries his face on his knees.

It is well that the water that tumbles and fills
  Goes moaning and moaning along;
For an echo rolls out from the sides of the hills,
  And he starts at a wonderful song—
  At the sound of a wonderful song.

And he sees through the rents of the scattering fogs
  The corroboree warlike and grim,
And the lubra who sat by the fire on the logs
  To watch like a mourner for him—
  Like a mother and mourner for him.

Will he go in his sleep from these desolate lands,
  Like a chief to the rest of his race,
With the honey-voiced woman who beckons and stands
  And gleams like a dream in his face—
  Like a marvellous dream in his face?

STUDY NOTES.

1. The blacks (ab′-or-ig′-in-es: ig = ij) are dying out in Australia: civilization (the white people's ways of living) is fatal to them. They have completely died out in Tasmania, and it is only in places far removed from our larger settlements that we see them in any numbers in Western Australia. In this poem the poet tells of the sad and lonely life of "the last of his tribe." What lines tell you that this blackfellow has lost all the joy of living?

2. What sounds does he hear that make him dream of the happy days of long ago—before the coming of the white people? What does he dream about? What sights does he see that must bring him great joy? Whom does he see waiting for him in dreamland? Perhaps he will die in his sleep and go like . . . . . Complete this unfinished sentence.

Word-Study:

wall'-ar-oos (woll'-ar oos): small native animals resembling kangaroos.

cov'-erts: hidden places that serve as shelter and protection.

wom'-er-a (**wom** rhymes with **Tom**), a throwing stick used for throwing spears.

nul'-la: a club or stick with a knob on the end, used for killing game or in fighting.

cor-rob'-o-ree: a dance of the Australian natives to celebrate some great event; a war dance.

lu'-bra (loo'-bra): native name for Australian ab'-or-ig'-in-al woman.

HOW HEREWARD PLAYED THE POTTER.

Charles Kingsley,
From "Hereward The Wake."

Part I.

Hereward's followers were now much troubled, being shut in both by land and water; and what was best to be done they knew not. They must send out a spy, and find out news from the outer world. But who would go?

This was the question asked by the bishop, and the abbot, and the earls in council. And all begged Hereward to let any man go rather than himself. But the Wake had made up his mind to go.

"I am going, lords and knights," said he "It is one day to Brandon. It may be two days back. On the fourth day you shall hear of me or from me."

And he strode out.

He cropped his golden beard; and Torfreda wept, as she cropped his golden locks, half with fear for him, half in sorrow over his shorn glories.

And Hereward put on dirty old clothes, and taking mare Swallow with him, got into a barge and went across the river to Soham.

He could not go down the great Ouse and up the little Ouse, which was his easiest way, for the French held all the river below the isle; and, besides, to have come straight from Ely might cause suspicion. So he went down to Fordham, and crossed the Lark at Mildenhall; but just before he got to Mildenhall he met a potter carrying pots on a pony.

"Halt, my stout churl," quoth he, "and put thy pots on my mare's back."

"The man who wants them must fight for them," quoth the stout churl, raising a heavy staff.

"Then here is he that will," quoth Hereward; and jumping off his mare he twisted the staff out of the potter's hands, and knocked him down with it.

"That will teach thee to know an Englishman when thou seest him."

"I have met my master," quoth the churl, rubbing his head. "But it is hard to be robbed by an Englishman, after being robbed a dozen times by the French."

"I will not rob thee. There is a silver penny for thy pots and thy coat—for that I must have likewise. And if thou tellest to mortal man aught about this, I will find those that will cut thee up for dogs' meat; but, if not, then turn thy horse's head and ride back to Ely, if thou canst cross the water, and say what hast befallen thee, and thou wilt find there an abbot who will give thee another penny for thy news."

So Hereward took the pots, and the potter's clay-greased coat, and went on through Mildenhall crying, "Pots! pots! Good pots and pans!"

And he came to Brandon, to the King's Court. And there rang in his ears his own message to William: "When thou art King of all England, I will put my hands between thine and be thy man."

"He is not King of all England yet!" thought Hereward; and he drew himself up so proudly that a passer-by jeered him—

"There goes a bold swaggerer enough to be selling pots abroad."

The Wake slouched his shoulders and looked as mean a churl as ever. Next he looked about for a night's lodging, for it was dark.

Outside the town was a wretched cabin of mud and turf; and Hereward said to himself: "This is bad enough to be good enough for me."

So he knocked at the door, and knocked till it was opened, when a hideous old crone put out her head.

"Who wants to see me at this time of the night?"

"Anyone who has heard how beautiful you are. Do you want any pots?"

"Pots? what have I to do with pots, thou saucy fellow? I thought it was someone wanting a charm." And she shut the door.

"A charm?" thought Hereward. "Maybe she can tell me news, if she is a witch. They are shrewd souls, these witches, and know more than they tell."

So he knocked again, till the old woman looked out once more and bade him angrily be off.

"But I am belated here, good dame, and afraid of the French. And I will give thee the best bit of clay on my mare's back for a night's lodging."

"Have you any little jars—jars no bigger than my hand?" asked she; for she used them in her trade, and had broken one of late, but to pay for one she had neither money nor mind. So she agreed to let Hereward sleep there, for the value of two jars—"But what of that ugly brute of a horse of thine?"

"She will do well enough in the turf-shed."

"Then thou must pay with a panshin."

"Ugh!" groaned Hereward, "thou drivest a hard bargain for an Englishwoman, with a poor Englishman."

"How knowest thou that I am English?"

"So much the better if thou art not," thought Hereward; and he bargained with her for a panshin to let him have the turf-house and some bad hay for his mare.

"Thou canst sleep there on the rushes. I have nought to give thee to eat."

Hereward threw himself down on a bundle of rush, and in a few minutes snored loudly.

But he was never less asleep. He looked round the whole place, and he listened to every word.

Adapted.

STUDY NOTES.

PART I.

1. Hereward and his followers were shut up in the island of Ely by William's armies. He wanted to find out what plans William was forming to capture Ely. A spy must, of course, disguise himself (change his appearance). How did Hereward disguise himself?

2. In what way was Hereward lucky in meeting a potter? Tell the story of that meeting as the potter might have told it when he reached home.

3. Tell the story of the meeting of Hereward and the first witch as Hereward might afterwards have told it to Torfrida, his wife.

Word-Study:

churl (sound ch as in **church**): a countryman or labourer.
aught (sound as in **taught**): anything.
swag'-ger-er: a noisy, bullying fellow.
crone: an old woman—used in a disrespectful manner.
be-la'-ted: overtaken by night.
pan'-shin: an earthen vessel—something like a cup.

Part II.

The witch's cabin seemed more miserable than that of other old women. The floor was mud, the rafters unceiled; the stars shone through the turf roof. A hanging shelf, on which stood five or six little earthen jars, was the only sign of the witch's trade. A human skull—probably used to frighten her patients—dangled from the roof.

Hereward wished himself safe through the adventure, without being turned into a hare or a wolf.

"I would sooner be a wolf than a hare, of course; but—who comes here?"

And to the first old crone, who sat winking her bleared eyes and warming her bleared hands over a little fire in the middle of the cabin, entered another crone, if possible uglier.

"Two of them! If I am not roasted and eaten this night, I am a lucky man."

The two old hags began talking to each other in French!

"Well, how have you sped? Have you seen the King?"

"No; but what foul fiend have you lying there?"

"Only an English brute. He cannot understand us. Talk on; only don't wake the hog. Have you got the gold?"

"Never mind."

Then there was a grumbling and a quarrelling, from which Hereward understood that the gold was to be shared between them.

"But it is a bit of a chain. To cut it will spoil it."

The other insisted, and he heard them chop the gold chain in two.

"And is that all?"

"I had work enough to get that. He said he would give it to me after the isle was taken, but I said that my spirit would not come over the sea from Normandy unless it smelt gold."

"And what did you tell him then?"

"That the King must go back to Aldreth again, for only from that place would he take the isle; for—and that was true enough—I dreamt that I saw all the water of Aldreth full of wolves, clambering over into the island on each other's backs."

"That means that some of them will be drowned."

"Let them drown. I left him to find out that part of the dream for himself. Then I told him how he must make another causeway, bigger and stronger than the last, and a tower on which I could stand and curse the English. And I promised him to bring a storm right in the faces of the English, so that they could neither fight nor see."

"But if the storm does not come?"

"It will come. I know the signs of the sky; the weather will break up in a week. Therefore I told him he must begin his work at once, before the rain came on, and that we would go and ask the spirit of the well to tell us the fortunate day for attacking."

"That is my business," said the other; "and my spirit likes the smell of gold as well as yours. Little you would have got from me if you had not given me half the chain."

Then the two rose.

"Let us see whether the English hog is asleep."

One of them came and listened to Hereward's breathing, and put her hand upon his chest. His hair stood on end, and a cold sweat came over him. But he snored more loudly than ever.

The two crones went out satisfied. Then Hereward rose and glided after them.

They went down a meadow to a little well, hung round with bits of rag and flowers.

Hereward hid behind a hedge, and watched them stooping over the well, mumbling their spells.

Then there was silence, and a tinkling sound as of water.

"Once-twice-thrice," counted the witches Nine times he counted the tinkling sound.

"The ninth day—the ninth day, and the King shall take Ely," said one of the hags in a cracked scream, rising and shaking her fist towards the isle.

Hereward was more than half minded to put his dagger—the only weapon which he had—into the two old beldames. But the fear of an outcry kept him still. He had already found

out so much that he was determined to find out more. So to-morrow he would go up to the court itself, and try his luck.

He slipped back to the cabin, and lay down again; and, as soon as he had seen the two old crones safe asleep, fell asleep himself, and was so tired that he lay still till the sun was high.

"Get up!" screamed the old dame at last, kicking him, "or I shall make you give me another crock for a double night's lodging."

Hereward paid his lodging, put his baskets on the mare, and went on his way.

STUDY NOTES.

PART II.

1. Even great people were afraid of witches in the days of the Conquest. What tells you that Hereward was afraid of the two witches?

2. Find the part telling you that one of William's followers gave the witch gold to help the Norman conquerors against Hereward. This witch pretended that she could bring a great spirit from Normandy to help William.

3. What did Hereward find out from the witches' conversation?

4. Tell the story of the witches' visit to the enchanted well. What secret did Hereward find out by following them?

5. What did one of the witches do that showed she hated Hereward?

Word-Study:

un'-ceiled (ceiled rhymes with field): unlined; without a ceiling.
prob'-a-bly: likely.
bleared: watery, as bleared eyes; sore.
how have you sped?: what luck have you had?
foul: filthy.
fiend (feend): devil,
bel'-dames: old hags,

LORD OF ALL BEING.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Lord of all being, throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star;
Centre and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!

Sun of our life, Thy quickening ray
Sheds on our path the glow of day;
Star of our hope, Thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.

Our midnight is Thy smile withdrawn;
Our noontide is Thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch Thy mercy's sign;
All, save the clouds of sin, are Thine.

Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is life, whose warmth is love,
Before Thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no lustre of our own.

Grant us Thy truth to make us free
And kindling hearts that burn for Thee,
Till all Thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame.

STUDY NOTES.

1. This poem might well be called a hymn because it sings of the glory of God. Fill in the blanks of this sentence: You see His glory in the . . . . and in the . . . . . of the heavens. What word in the first verse tells of the

greatness of God's glory? Complete (finish) the following sentence: When you look up at the heavens (the throne of God) He appears far off, yet those who love God know . . .

2. Why is God called the sun of our life? Give the words in the second verse that answer this question. What else is God called in this verse? Why?

3. When God's smile is withdrawn from us because of our sins, we are left in darkness. What word in verse three means darkness? What word in the same verse makes us think of the glory of the day? What is the rainbow said to be?

4. Read the lines telling us that we need no splendid lights of our own: God's glorious light from on high is all that we need.

Word-Study:

lus'-tre (lus'-ter): splendour (splen'-der): brightness.

sphere (sfere): a heavenly body, such as the sun, the moon or a star.

A FIGHT WITH A WHALE.

Ballantyne—Fighting Whales.

Part I.

One day I was standing beside the windlass listening to the conversation of five or six of the men who were busy sharpening harpoons, and cutting-knives and other things out of whales' bones. Fred Borders was telling his mates about the food of whales, especially about the very small sea-blubbers on which they feed, when, all at once, there came from the mast-head a loud cry that made us all spring to our feet.

"There she blows! There she breaches!"

The captain was on deck in a moment.

"Where away?" he shouted.

"On the lee beam, sir, sperm whale, about two miles off. There she blows!"

Every man was at his post in a moment; for, after being some months out, we became so used to the work that we acted together like a piece of machinery. But our excitement never abated in the least.

"Call out when the ship heads for her!" ordered the captain.

"Aye, aye, sir," came the reply from the mast-head.

"Keep her away!" said the captain to the man at the helm. "Bob Ledbury, hand me the spy glass."

While we all looking eagerly out ahead, we heard a thundering snore behind us, followed by a heavy splash. Turning quickly round, we saw the flukes of an enormous whale sweeping through the air, not more than six hundred yards astern of us.

"Down your helm," roared the captain; "haul up the mainsail and square the yards. Call all hands."

"All hands, ahoy!" thundered Bill Blunt, and in a moment every man in the ship was on deck.

"Hoist and swing the boats," cried the captain. "Lower away."

Down went the boats into the water. The men were in their places in the twinkling of an eye, and we pulled away from the ship just as the whale rose the second time, about half a mile away to leeward.

From the appearance of this whale we felt certain that it was one of the largest we had yet seen, so we pulled after it with right good will. I occupied the usual place in the captain's boat, next the bow oar, just beside Tom Lokins, who was ready with his harpoons in the bow. Young Borders pulled the oar just in

front of me. The captain himself steered, and, as our crew was a picked one, we soon left the other two boats behind us.

Presently a small whale rose close beside us, and, sending a shower of spray over the boat, went down in a pool of foam. Before we had time to speak, another whale rose on the opposite side of the boat, and then another on our starboard bow. We were in the middle of a school of whales, which commenced leaping and spouting all round us, little aware of the dangerous enemy that was so near.

A few minutes later, up came the big one that we had first seen. He seemed very active and wild. After blowing on the surface once or twice, about a quarter of a mile off, he peaked his flukes, and pitched down, head foremost.

"Now then, lads, he's down for a long dive," said the captain; "spring your oars like men; we'll get that fish for certain, if you'll only pull."

The captain was mistaken; the whale had only gone down deep in order to come up and breach or spring out of the water. A few minutes later he came up not a hundred yards from us, and leaped his whole length into the air.

A shout of surprise broke from the men, and no wonder, for this was the largest fish we had ever seen or heard of. He came up so clear of

the water that we could see him from head to tail, as he turned in the air; and he came down on his side with a crash like thunder. A splendid mass of pure white spray burst from the spot where he fell, and in another moment he was gone.

"I do believe it's *New Zealand Tom*," cried Bill Blunt, referring to an old bull whale that had become famous among the men who frequented those seas. He was said to be of immense size, and so very fierce that he had smashed some of the whale boats of his pursuers, and carried off many harpoons.

"I don't know whether he is New Zealand Tom or not," said the captain, "but I am certain that he is an old sperm bull. Give way, lads, we must get that whale at all costs."

We did not need a second bidding; the whale was so huge that we felt more excited than we had ever before been during the whole voyage. We bent our oars till we almost pulled the boat out of the water. The other boats had become separated, chasing little whales; we, therefore, had this one all to ourselves.

"There she blows!" said Tom Lokins, in a low voice, as the fish came up a short distance astern of us.

We had overshot our mark; so, turning about, we made for the whale, which kept for a considerable time near the top of the water, spout-

ing now and then, and going slowly to windward. We at last got within a few feet of the monster, when the captain suddenly gave the order, "Stand up." This was to our harpooner, Tom Lokins, who jumped up on the instant, and buried two harpoons deep in the blubber.

"Stern, all!" was the next order, and we backed off with all our might. We were just in time, for, in his agony, the whale tossed his tail right over our heads. The flukes were so big that they could have completely covered our boat. He brought them down flat on the sea with a clap that made our ears tingle, and drenched us to the skin with a shower of spray. For a moment I thought it was all over with us; but we were soon out of immediate danger, and we lay on our oars watching the writhings of the wounded monster, as he lashed the ocean into foam. The water all round us soon became white like milk, and the foam near the whale was red with blood.

Suddenly this ceased, and, before we could pull up to lance him, he went down, taking the line out at such a rate that the boat spun round, and sparks of fire flew from the logger-head owing to the friction of the rope.

"Hold on!" cried the captain, and the next minute we were tearing over the sea at a fearful rate, with a bank of white foam rolling before us, high above our bows, and away on each side of us like the track of a steamer. We

expected every moment to be swamped. Never before had I seen anything like this, and I had a feeling that some evil would surely befall us.

STUDY NOTES.

PART I.

1. What cry is it that always causes great excitement on board a whaling boat?
2. How many boats pursued the whales?
3. Find a passage showing you that whaling was a dangerous occupation in times gone by. Describe the process of killing a whale. Now-a-days the harpoon is fired from a gun on board the whaling boat.
4. Describe the whale that the captain's boat pursued.
5. What does a whale do when it is harpooned?
6. The bow of a ship is the fore part. What is the name given to the after or rear end of a ship?

Word-Study:

wind'-lass: a machine for raising weights. Water is often raised from a well by a windlass. The anchor is often raised by the windlass.

breach: to break the water by leaping out of it as the whale does.

lee'-ward (lu'-erd): in the same direction as that in which the wind is blowing. The opposite to leeward is windward.

lee-beam: directly to leeward.

a-bat'-ed (sound **bat** as **bate**): lessened; decreased in violence.

flukes: the two parts of the tail. The space between these two parts forms the letter **V**.

star-board: the side of a ship that is on your right hand as you face the bow or fore part. The opposite to **starboard** is **port**.

peaked his flukes: raised his tail straight out of the water.

writh'-ings (sound **wri** as in **write**, and **th** as in **that**): the twistings of the whale's body, caused by agony (very great pain).

fric'-tion (frick-shun): the rubbing of one surface against another: the rope running rapidly over the boat's edge (the friction of the rope) caused sparks to fly.

Part II.

While we were tearing over the water in this way we saw many other whales coming up every now and then, and blowing quite near us. Presently we passed close enough to the first mate's boat to see that he was fast to a fish, and unable, therefore, to render us any assistance if we should need it.

In a short time the line began to slack, so we hauled it in hand over hand, and Tom Lokins coiled it away in the tub at the stern of the boat, while the captain took his place in the bow of the boat to be ready with the lance. The whale soon came up, and we pulled with all our might towards him. Instead of making off again, however, he turned round and made straight at the boat. I now thought that destruction was certain, for, when I saw his great blunt forehead coming down on us like a steamboat, I felt that we could not escape. I was mistaken. The captain received him on the point of his lance, when he at once turned away.

For some time we kept dodging round him; but he was so old and wise that he always turned his head to us, thus preventing us from getting a chance to lance him. At length, however, he turned a little to one side, and the captain, seizing his opportunity, thrust the lance deep into his vitals.

"Ha! that has touched his life," cried Tom, as a stream of blood flew up from the whale's blowholes, a sure sign that he was mortally wounded. But he was not yet conquered: he pitched right down, head foremost, and once more the line began to fly out over the bow. We tried to hold on, but he was going down so straight that the boat was almost swamped, and we had to slack off to prevent our being pulled under the water.

Before many yards of the line had run out, one of the coils in the tub became entangled.

"Look out, lads!" cried Tom, and at once throwing the turn off the logger-head, he attempted to clear it. The captain, in endeavouring to assist, slipped and fell. Seeing this, I sprang up, and grasping the coil as it flew past, tried to clear it. But I was not quick enough: a turn of the rope whipped round my left wrist; I felt a wrench as if my arm had been torn out of its socket, and in a moment I was overboard, going down, down, down, with lightning speed into the depths of the sea. Strange to say, I did not lose my presence of mind. I knew exactly what had happened. A stream of fire seemed to be whizzing past my eyes; there was a dreadful pressure on my brain, and a roaring as of thunder in my ears.

But suddenly the roaring ceased, and I felt myself buffeting the water fiercely in my efforts to reach the surface. I know not how I

got free, but I suppose the turn of the line must have slackened off somehow. All this happened within the space of a few brief moments; but, oh! they seemed an eternity to me. I do not think I could have held my breath a second longer.

When I came to the surface and tried to look about me, I saw the boat not more than fifty yards off, and, being a good swimmer, I struck out for it, although I felt terribly exhausted. In a few minutes my comrades saw me, and with a cheer they began to row towards me. I saw that the line was slack, and that it was being hauled in—a sure sign that the whale had ceased running, and would soon come to the surface again. Before the boat had advanced half a-dozen strokes, I saw the water open close beside the boat; and then the monstrous head of the whale shot up like a great rock rising out of the deep.

He was not more than three feet from the boat, and he came up with such force that more than half his gigantic length came out of the water right over the boat. I heard the captain's loud cry "stern all!" But it was too late; the whole weight of the monster's body fell upon the boat; there was a crash and a terrible cry as the whale and the boat went down together.

For a few moments he continued to lash the sea in his fury, and the fragments of the boat

floated all round him. I thought that every one in the boat must have been killed; but one after another their heads appeared in the midst of blood and foam, and they struck out for oars and pieces of the wreckage.

Fortunately, the whale in his tossings had shot a little way from the spot, else every man must certainly have been killed.

A feeling of horror took possession of me as I beheld all this, and thought of my own condition. Luckily, I had managed to reach a broken plank, and was thus able to keep afloat. Just then I heard a cheer, and the next time I rose on the swell, I saw the mate's boat making for us as fast as a stout and willing crew could pull. In a few minutes I was clutched by the arm and pulled into the boat. My comrades were next rescued, and we were all thankful to find that no lives had been lost. One of the crew, however, had a broken leg, and another an arm twisted out of joint. They all seemed to think that my escape was more wonderful than theirs; but I cannot say that I agreed with this opinion.

We now turned our attention to the whale, which had dived again. As he was now loose, we did not know where he would come up again; we, therefore, lay still awhile. Very soon, however, he re-appeared, not far from us, and as fierce as ever.

"Now, lads, we must get that whale," cried the mate; "give way with a will."

The order was obeyed. The boat almost leaped ahead, and, before long, another harpoon was in the whale's back.

"Fast again, hurrah!" shouted the mate: "now for the lance!"

He gave the monster two deep stabs while he spoke, and it rolled on the sea in its agony, compelling us to keep well out of the way.

I could not look upon the dying struggles of this enormous fish without feelings of regret and self-reproach for having helped to destroy it. But the thought passed quickly from my mind as the whale became more violent and went into its flurry. It began to lash the sea with such astonishing violence that all the previous struggles seemed as nothing. The water all round became white like milk, with great red spots through it; and the sound of the quick blows of its tail and fins resembled that of dull, hollow thunder. We gazed at this scene in deep silence and with beating hearts.

All at once the struggles ceased. The great carcass rolled over on its back, and lay on the sea. To me it seemed as if a dead calm had suddenly fallen around us after a long and furious storm. The silence was suddenly broken by three hearty cheers, and then, fastening a rope to our prize, we commenced towing it to our ship, a distance of eight miles. It was late in

the night when we reached the ship, and we were very tired, but we were happy in having secured a prize worth about £500.

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STUDY NOTES.

PART II.

1. What did the whale do that makes you think he was very cunning?

2. You can always tell when a whale is mortally wounded: how?

3. Tell the story of what happened to Tom as he might have told it to his brother when he returned home.

4. Tell how the crew of the captain's boat had a very narrow escape from death.

5. Which two of the following words best describe the fight with the whale: good, desperate, long, exciting.

Word-Study:

Vi'-tals: the parts which, when pierced, cause death. The brain, the heart, the lungs are vital parts.

mor'-tal-ly: so as to cause death.

log'-ger-head: an upright piece of round timber in a whale boat, over which a turn of the rope is taken when it is running out too fast.

buf'-fet-ing: a succession of blows, as of winds or waves; the beating of the waves on the boats.

gi-gan'-tic (ji-gan'-tic): of great size; like a giant.

flurry: the violent movements of the body of the whale when on the point of death; all the muscles seem to be moving violently.

WANDER-THIRST.

Gerald Goula.

Beyond the East the sunrise; beyond the West the sea;
And East and West the Wander-Thirst that will not let me be;
It works in me like madness, dear, to bid me say good-bye,
For the seas call, and the stars call, and oh! the call of the sky!
I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue hills are,
But a man can have the sun for a friend, and for his guide a star;
And there's no end of voyaging when once the voice is heard,
For the rivers call, and the road calls, and oh! the call of a bird!
Yonder the long horizon lies, and there by night and day
The old ships draw to home again, the young ships sail away;
And come I may, but go I must, and if men ask you why,
You may put the blame on the stars and the sun, and the white road and the sky.

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